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1990 - The Year In Review™

Our Man Of The Year: CAPTAIN AMERICA!

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Do You Know Me?
Though I rule over Latveria with a fist of iron, I find that when I'm outside my native country my face isn't well known
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MIGNOLA
LATVERIAN EXPRESS
VICTOR VON DOOM
CARDHOLDER SINCE 1967
LATVERIAN EXPRESS
Don't leave home without it.

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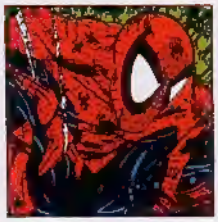
CONTENTS

PROFILES:

COVER: CAPTAIN AMERICA
is no flash in the pan. This year's MAN OF THE YEAR has been in the limelight for half a century!
..... 8



SPIDER-MAN's
deadliest foes, Kraven and the Lizard, are held up for public inspection
..... 7

NICK FURY:
Who says an old dog can't learn new tricks? Nick is still the driving force behind the all new and improved SHIELD
..... 19

SCARLET WITCH:
Sure, times have been tough for her, but that's not a good enough excuse for Red's latest bad behavior
..... 29

THE THING:
Ben Grimm's fairy tale might be the start of a new career — stand-up comedy
..... 40

TEAM SPIRIT:

13.
X-FACTOR's image is turning from bad to worse, and Archangel isn't helping.

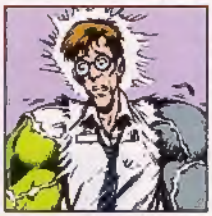
36.
THE SUPER TEAM SITUATION: updates on the AVENGERS, EXCALIBUR, the NEW MUTANTS, the NEW FANTASTIC FOUR, the NEW WARRIORS...

42.
THE PEACE CORPSE were no match against the AVENGERS and ALPHA FLIGHT.

44.
GENOSHA vs THE X-MEN: a prosperous nation proves to be an abomination.

1990 - The Year In Review

CABLE:
the question may not be who is he, but simply, is he?
. 16



THE INCREDIBLE HULK:
If these colors don't look right to you, you're not alone. The Hulk has changed — again
. 18

DEATHLOK:
Half man. Half machine. All action. Deathlok is the latest in a string of media-star vigilantes
. 25

GHOST RIDER:
There's a new flaming-skulled motorcycle-riding demon in NYC. Most citizens aren't batting an eye, but we think this is more than just a Halloween prank
. 28

SHE-HULK's
jaunt into the Baloneyverse has left her reticent. What's happened to Shulkie, our tell-all ham of old?
. 43

DAREDEVIL:
Many men may go to hell, but how many can say they've lived to tell the tale?
. 48

DEPARTMENTS:

14. CORPORATE NEWS
17. MEDIA
20. LOOSE LIPS
26. RESURRECTIONS/DEATHS
30. BEST DRESSED/WORST DRESSED
45. McCRITIC'S OPINION

from the editor 4
letters 5
sneak preview 6
classifieds 46

FROM THE EDITOR

SOMETHING OLD BECOMES SOMETHING NEW

The mail response to our 1989 issue has been overwhelmingly positive. Sorry to disappoint most of you letter writers, but in order to keep up the quality of this austere publication (but mostly in order for us to keep our sanity around here), it just won't be possible to turn YEAR IN REVIEW into MONTH IN REVIEW.

We have, however, incorporated some of your other good suggestions into this year's format. Our new, upbeat format concentrates more on the *people* of the year — the celebrities and super heroes who in 1990 stood out . . . and made waves.

Take Captain America, for instance. Our cover guy has received a lot of attention of late, and not just because he's celebrating his golden anniversary! (Look at the cover and ask yourself — doesn't he look great for his age?) Fabian Nicieza's article on our Man of the Year shows a multi-faceted Cap that we're sure will delight and surprise you.

The biggest change in our format comes in the form of our more in-depth profiles. From our "new guys in town" department, check out Gary Barnum's profiles on both the new Ghost Rider and the new Hulk, and Eric Fein's piece on the New Deathlok. And they aren't the only profile-worthy super heroes in town: the Scarlet Witch, Archangel, Cable, Nick Fury, Spider-Man, the Thing — prefix each of these with "neo" and then read the articles. You'll know what I mean.

Another don't-miss — Janet Van Dyne's regular feature on the best and worst dressed of 1990. This year Janet decided to bestow praise on — and take pot shots at — certain *costume*-clad celebs.

In the way of a sneak peek, we asked fashion writer Max Fleisher to preview our sister magazine, MARVEL ILLUSTRATED: *the swimsuit issue*. Max had a chance to talk to MI's fashion editor, super heroine Janet Van Dyne, about her swimsuit shoot in the Savage Lands. The magazine debuts next month and is a "not to be missed" issue for all you, er, bathing suit aficionados.

In our ever continuing effort to take ourselves less seriously than last year, we invited gossip columnist Suzanne Gaffney to come on board and dig up her usual dirt on the stars — and what she gave us was a deliciously dishy *Loose Lips*. We hope this feature will be a regular!

I could go on and on. But instead, I'll just say read for yourself. And I hope you enjoy!

Bobbie Chase

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MAIL

Dear Marvel Maniacs,

I've been making mine Marvel since 1965. My closets and storage space are overflowing with years of heroics in vivid color, and I even look to your magazines for inspiration in my business life (I'm a physician/speaker). But this is the first time in all these years that I've been moved to write a letter. I TOTALLY ENJOYED 1989 THE YEAR IN REVIEW! The articles summarized nicely all the recent events in my favorite alternate universe, and the historical perspective was delightful. This is the kind of Marvel magic and creativity that has held my attention and fascinated me since I was a teenager. I only wish the magazine was published monthly, or at least quarterly, so I could read about my favorite characters in this format a little more often. Thanks for the brilliant effort. I will continue to make mine Marvel! Excelsior!

Dr. Richard M. Kirschner
Ashland, OR

Dear Bobbie,

Lately an outstanding work of art has come to my attention. It happens to be Marvel: 1989 THE YEAR IN REVIEW. I'd read about this and decided to buy it before it even came out. I thought that it would just be another wonderful Marvel production. Boy was I fooled; when I picked this up at the comic store, I was shocked. It was absolutely incredible! I wanted another after I'd read this about the 8th time. So here's my suggestion to you and the rest of the staff. Make it a monthly or bi-monthly with subscriptions available. Please take this into recognition, because I can't wait another year to get one. By the way, on page 34, the small box in the corner where the X-Men's names are listed Psylocke is listed as being Shadowcat. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Ryan Hembree
Anchorage, AK

Psylocke WAS misidentified in the 1989 edition. Our humblest apologies to her.

Dear Bobbie, James, et al:

Just when I thought MARVEL UNIVERSE and MARVEL SAGA were the ultimate reference works regarding Marvel characters and continuity, along comes the first in what (I hope) will be an annual series of Marvel retrospectives. MARVEL: 1989 THE YEAR IN REVIEW was the most stylish Marvel publication since EPIC ILLUSTRATED, and it was also the best-researched summary of ANY company's continuity in the past year, surpassing even the Distinguished Competition's newspaper parody. Of special interest to this Marvelite were Peter Sanderson's rhapsodic recap of ATLANTIS ATTACKS!, Peter David's pulse-pounding profile of the Sensational She-Hulk, (If that's J. David Guntly's honest-to-Uatu real

name, I require a no-prize), Glenn Herdling's investigation of Cosmic Spidey, the aforementioned Mr. David's (or Mr. Guntly's) special report on the whereabouts of a certain "Joe Fixit," and Magnificent Marvel's answer to Elsa Klensch, the ever-wonderful Wasp and her ten best (and ten worst) dressed of the year. I suspect that Dwayne McDuffie was responsible for the copy for that witty DAMAGE CONTROL ad, because no Marvel writer could possibly know the Controllers any better than the original author of the funniest superhero series to come out of Marvel since THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK. (I was going to say HOWARD THE DUCK but I didn't want Shulkie to come over to my place and tear up all my HOWARDS!) The Roxxon ad was right on target. I LOVED the Latverian tourism ad, and the classifieds were hilarious. (Although the Wizard interview owed more to the PLAYBOY style than to the TIME style, it was still in keeping with the overall spirit of the parody.) Keep up the MARVELous work, and until those guys on Fifth Avenue parody NEWSWEEK, make mine MARVEL! Excelsior!

Steven Long Eisenpreis
New York City, NY

To the Year in Review staff,

There is only one word that can describe your "YEAR IN REVIEW" and that word is MARVELOUS! I was in a store looking for my favorite Marvel titles when I came across your comic (magazine). I thought, what the heck, I had enough money, and besides, it was burning a hole in my pocket. When I sat down to read it, I was taken totally by surprise! I expected to see something like a letter from the editor. I started reading it when the advertisement caught my eye. A commercial for DAMAGE CONTROL. I frantically flipped through it only to see other advertisements for STARK ENTERPRISES and travel commercials for LATVERIA (totally unexpected). Then I started reading some of the columns. They were great, especially when you cover such a wide range of topics. The Classifieds were my favorite, especially the one about the babysitter. But what really stood out and what I and probably the rest of the readers appreciated the most was there were no real advertisements. It was all Marvel. Ms. Chase, you and your staff REALLY bring the Marvel Universe to life. Because of this piece of work, you have just created the largest MARVEL-AHOLIC ever.

Kevin Longman
Hardisty, Alberta, Canada

Dear staff of the Marvel Year In Review,

I'd like to commend you on an excellent job. I loved the way you made daily Marvel comic book life look like daily REAL life. This was the first Marvel Year in Review I've ever seen, but trust me, I'll be buying it again at the end of this year. I laughed my head off when I read the stuff on Roxxon. It was great. I think Janet Van Dyne should put the Invisible Woman in the Worst Dressed List and Marlo in the Best. Well, most in most, it was a great job. So long.

Gary Lam
Squamish, Brit. Col.

SNEAK PREVIEW:

Marvel Illustrated™

The Swimsuit Issue

ON SALE NEXT MONTH!

Oh to be a grain of sand, on a beach of The Savage Land!

Not quite poetry, but some of the action down here during the First Annual Swimsuit Issue, MARVEL ILLUSTRATED, photo shoot was poetry in motion! The otherwise tranquil jungle paradise called The Savage Land was positively overrun by the hottest of the hot; those who had managed to swing an invitation to the biggest charity event of the year.

It all started with a concert to benefit a new environmental protection fund, to be administered by the *Maria Stark Foundation*. Music was provided by the incomparable *Dazzler* (aka *Alison Blaire*), with a warm-up set by the group *Cat's Laughing*. I asked *Peter Parker*, a freelance photographer covering the event, why he traveled to the depths of Antarctica — not an easy trip — for the concert. He replied, "I'd rather swing here than in New York City" and went back to dancing with his lovely wife, top model *Mary Jane Watson-Parker*.

Peter Parker served as one of three photographers for what will undoubtedly be the most remembered magazine of the year. Due to a fortuitous bit of planning on the part of fashion shoot editor *Janet Van Dyne*, Ms. Van Dyne was able to fulfill a long-time wish. "For years I'd been looking at that other annual swimsuit issue, and thinking to myself that the people in *that* magazine weren't the ones I'd necessarily want to see in a swimsuit. First off, there weren't any guys!"

Luckily for Ms. Van Dyne, the Maria Stark Foundation benefit concert provided the perfect excuse for gathering a very interesting group of people in a setting of unspoiled natural beauty. "Weeks before the concert, I said to myself, I'll never have a chance like this again!" She let just a few people in on her plan, for instance asking *Lord Kevin Plunder* of The Savage Land whether it would be an inconvenience if a hundred or so guests stayed an extra week. "I blanched at first," he said, "but then my wife *Shanna* reminded me how rarely we have company, so I said what the heck."

Ms. Van Dyne, a fashion designer based in New York City, was "delightfully surprised at how cooperative people are when you hold a camera over them." She quipped, "Most everyone involved in the project is a Very Important Person. Why, it's rumored one or two have even saved the entire world from one threat or another. But put them in front of a camera, with the knowledge that their picture will go out to absolute *millions* and they behave like lambs."

I was lucky enough to catch a peek at an early copy of the MARVEL ILLUSTRATED First Annual Swimsuit Issue, and all I can say is that it was most certainly worth the effort. The pics are hot, hot, hot! And I was glad to hear Janet Van Dyne say, "I'm looking into the possibility of doing another one next year." Good going, Janet!

—Max Fleisher

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

An Out-of-Character Lizard Plays Pit-Bull to a Would-be Kraven

On the corner of 96th Street and Third Avenue, in Manhattan's upper east side, there once stood a monument to perhaps the greatest hunter of all time — Sergei Kravinoff, otherwise known as *Kraven*. There, in a dark, Gothic studio apartment building, Kraven would adorn his trophy room with the rarest, deadliest, and most beautiful of his recent prey. Ironically, this sanctuary also served as the hunting ground for Kraven's last victim — himself.

Several weeks ago, the sanctuary mysteriously burned to the ground. Officials were unsure as to the exact cause of the fire, but witnesses agree that the wall-crawling wonder called *Spider-Man* staged an extraordinary battle there with not one, but two of his adversaries prior to the structure's demise.

Although there are conflicting reports as to the identity of the first combatant, the second was unanimously identified as the lethal *Lizard*, who had been conducting a rampaging murder spree throughout the city. The nature of these attacks were more barbaric than anything the Lizard has carried out in the past. The humanoid reptile usually prefers cold, calculated planning over such savage measures to exert the dominance of his reptilian world.

Officials agree that the Lizard may have been under the control of some outside force, perhaps the unidentified combatant. The letters "CNNR" were written in blood upon the walls of several murder sites, suggesting that the Lizard may have been trying to leave a message for someone.

Mysterious drumbeats were heard by several bystanders in the vicinity at the time of the murders. *Jericho Drumm*, a noted psychologist and Haitian *houngan* (voodoo priest), identified the description of the drumbeats as those used in voodoo hunting ceremonies. "The Yoruba Spirit Drum is used by the *hounsi* (member) of a tribe to send their prey stampeding into their snares," said Drumm. "It does so by affecting the reticular system of an animal's brain, which controls its instincts and reflexes."

Above: Kraven and Lizard

Left: Spider-Man

artist's representations

If voodoo magic is indeed a factor in the Lizard's violent behavior, then it might also explain some other puzzling aspects of this case. For instance, police officials discovered huge quantities of reptilian blood on a warehouse floor after Spider-Man's initial encounter with the monster, indicating that the web-slinger had to use lethal force to subdue it. However, the Lizard apparently did not die from this "mortal" wound.

"Reptiles have the ability to regenerate missing body parts, but there is no way this creature could have survived the loss of so much blood," Drumm said, "unless, of course, it was aided by some supernatural voodoo potions."

Spider-Man also did not remain unaffected by this voodoo magic. During his subsequent battle with the Lizard, the creature somehow injected him with a poison, either on its teeth or its claws. "Voodoo hounsi use many hallucinogenic potions to work their magics," explained Drumm. "That way they can make their victims see what they most fear."

One witness, a homeless person named Jake, swears he heard Spider-Man call out the name "Kraven" to his tormentor. "That Spider-fellow sure must've been on somethin' lots stronger'n I ever drunk. I mean, sure, this person dressed all prissy like that Hunter, but these eyes ain't too old to see that the bod behind them clothes was definitely female!"

American authorities have discovered that at least on two occasions, Kraven was arrested along with a female accomplice for certain misdemeanors, one for which they were deported to Haiti. Haitian officials have since revealed that this woman, *Calypso Ezili*, is wanted for the murder of her own sister.

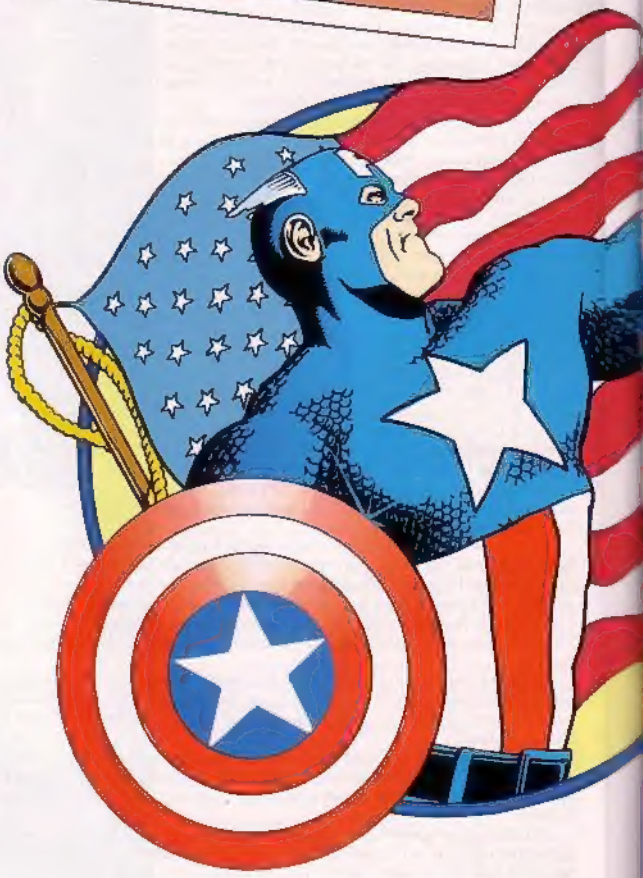
— Glenn Herdling

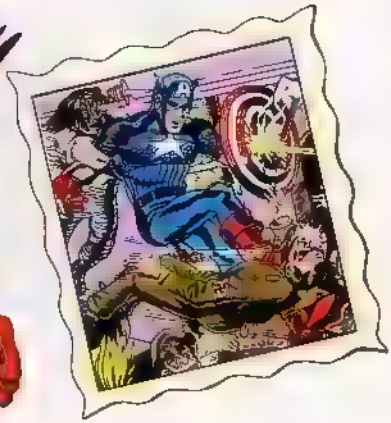
Feature

CAPTAIN AMERICA 1990 Man of the Year

By Fabian Nicieza

He has been getting the job done for over fifty years. He has set the standard which the people of the United States look up to. His aspirations are the embodiment of the American Dream, and his methods of achieving that dream create a manual for success. In this, his Golden Anniversary as the fighting symbol of his country, the nation has recognized the virtue, morality, respect for others, drive to succeed, and strength of convictions that *Captain America* represents.





Clockwise from left:
- **A stylized portrait of our "Man of the Year."**
- **Captain America plays leapfrog with some of his deadliest foes.**
- **Cap — pre-freeze, in 1941.**
- **"Together Again For The First Time" — With Black Widow and Wolverine.**

Beyond all of that, he was voted one of the Ten Sexiest Men Alive in the 1990 Year in Review poll of American women. [See inset, next page.]

Captain America saw the year of 1990 as one of great personal sacrifices and ideological hardship, as well as one physically demanding on both his time and stamina. As Chairman of the AVENGERS, Cap led his team successfully in fending off the assaults of the mad space pirate, Nebula, whose ultimate goal was

"There was some miscommunication between the heroes of the various countries and our different approaches to the desired goal . . ."

reputedly to become a threat to rival the existence of death itself.

Immediately on the heels of this crisis, the Avengers found themselves embroiled in an international terrorist situation involving a stolen British nuclear submarine. For the first time, they joined forces to fight the terrorists with an international brotherhood of super humans, the Canadian ALPHA FLIGHT team and the PEOPLE'S PROTECTORATE of the Soviet Union.

"It was a difficult situation," stated Cap afterwards, "and there was some miscommunication among the heroes of the various countries and our different approaches to the desired goal, but

thankfully, we were successful with a sad, but minimal loss of life."

Captain America showed his mettle in leading the heroes of the planet against a coordinated threat, and he was repaid by the recognition of the United Nations in creating a global super human community. Datalinks are now being introduced which allow the super powered operatives of other countries to share information with their ilk across the globe.

This year marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of Captain America's debut as Sentinel of Liberty.

"This should allow for greater freedom of information and international communication," the Avenger stated with obvious pride.

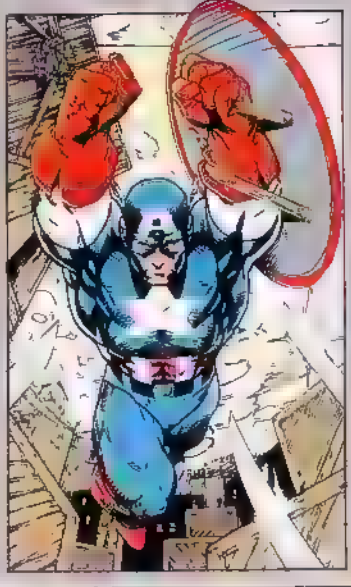
The U.N. itself has reworked the Avengers' charter and re-established their operating parameters to reflect their importance in their quest for global peace. Exactly how this will affect the Avengers or their leader, Captain America, remains to be seen.

On the personal front, this year marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of Captain America's debut as Sentinel of Liberty. Though details of his origin and identity are still shrouded in secrecy, and are exempt from the Congressional Freedom of Information Act, it is known that at some time in late 1940 a brave American youth volunteered for a highly dangerous experiment to create a Super-soldier. And since his very first public appearance in June of 1941, he has exemplified the best this country has to offer.

Captain America served as a living symbol of peace during World War II, involving himself directly in action on the front lines as well as in combat against the super human operatives that both the Nazis and the Japanese employed. As a member of the INVADERS, Cap served for years in some of the least publicized, but most important battles of the War.

When he disappeared in 1944, a piece of the country went with him. Others have worn the mantle of

CHAIN MAIL A TURN-ON?



Captain America is Voted One of this Country's *Sexiest Men Alive!*

So how does the admittedly shy man behind the cowl of Captain America react when informed he's been voted one of his country's sexiest men? Well, he blushes in abject embarrassment.

Given a few moments to compose himself, we finally pressed Cap to respond. To our delight, it was one of the few times we've ever seen this man of such nobility and character at a loss for the right thing to say!

"I — I ... uhm ..." he stammered out, "I — well, I'm flattered — it's quite an — uhm ... an honor, I guess ... top ten?"

Number four he was told.

Grace and etiquette prevented Captain America from asking who placed ahead of him in our nationwide poll, but he seemed genuinely surprised by the accolades. We also sensed a slight satisfaction, though he would never admit it.

When asked if Cap had any special woman in his life who might be envious of such recognition, he blushed again and said, "Uhm ... for the obvious safety of my loved ones, I'd prefer not to discuss my personal life ... but if she voted me any lower than fourth she'll have quite a bit to answer to." He finished with a hearty laugh and a beaming white smile that would make Tom Cruise jealous.

CAP SAYS NO TO DRUGS?

An AVENGER Confronts this Nation's Scourge

Recent reports indicated that Captain America had been acting rather irrationally throughout the streets of New York City. Included in these sightings were eyewitnesses who say they saw the star-spangled Avenger beating the masked adventurer Daredevil into unconsciousness.

Other less reliable information came from apprehended drug-dealers and gang-members who claimed that Cap had used excessive force in capturing them. When asked to comment on these reports, Cap simply stated, "I had been exposed to near-lethal dosages of a designer drug in that warehouse explosion on West 28th Street last June. The chemical's toxicity affected my judgment a bit. You'll be as relieved as I was to know I have overcome any problems I had, and I'd even immodestly say that I'm back... better than ever!"

Captain America, but none has worn it as well. Who could play Hamlet as well as *Olivier*? Who could write Sherlock Holmes as well as *Arthur Conan Doyle*? The original still stands the test of time, so upon his reappearance from a decades-long state of suspended animation, the country knew it had seen the return of its original son.

Cap has served the case of justice — even when it meant opposing the government of his land — since his return with an unwavering faith in what this country and flag stand for — liberty, justice and the hope for a better life.

Ironic though it may be, Cap seems to have had little time to acknowledge or enjoy his Anniversary as the demands on his time have increased.

"Quite honestly," he jokingly admits with a grin, "sometimes I feel as if I'm celebrating my one-hundred and fifteth anniversary."

A recent personal crisis [see inset above] about which Cap will say little, led him to re-evaluate his approach to his career. Not much is known about what Cap recently endured, but if anything, his experiences have fueled his desire to serve the people of this land and the fulfillment of the American Dream even more than before.

What will the next fifty years bring? Who can say? But one constant has endured for half of the Twentieth Century, and that constant is a man who has aspired to be the best he can be; aspired to help those in need, aspired to prove that the American Dream exists in the heart and soul of every living being. When asked if he intends to serve the country for another fifty years, Cap smiled with a little bit of leeriness and said, "As long as there is the will to do what is right, I will strive to do so. And there will be others after me who will continue the fight. So in fifty years or five hundred, it won't be the man doing it that will matter, it will be the ideal he is fighting for."

It is an ideal that each of us understands and is willing to cherish just a little bit more every time Captain America dons his red, white and blue costume and makes a stand for what he believes in — what we believe in — and what we can achieve — the American Dream.

THE FASHION OF THE TIMES?

Since this is Captain America's fiftieth anniversary, we asked some of today's leading fashion designers to give us their opinions on Cap's costume as it turns fifty and a new century looms ahead. Here's what they had to say:

Bill Blaise

"I think that it may have been functional when it was first created, but truly, it was meant to be worn while sloggin' around in muddy trenches and things like that. Now I would modernize the whole look, starting with the color scheme. Much too much blue right now. Maybe a little more white added to the mix might offset some of that costume's darkness. I mean, it looks like it was sewn by Betsy Ross all night... in the middle of the night with an oil lamp to guide her."

Federico Iedillini.

"I do not know this American fixation with red, white and blue! Everywhere, everywhere, everywhere. Maybe something in a mauve would look nicer... an earth-bound combination of subdued sunset brown and desert sand ones, no? And this shield and this costume? Ugh! Circles on the shield, stripes on the blouse... make up your mind, darling. I get dizzy just thinking about it, no?"

Janet Van Dyne:

"You have to be kidding me, right? It's a perfect costume. It's very functional for the kind of work he does, yet it elegantly makes a statement about the man and the symbol. No, super hero today has as readily a recognizable costume as Cap, and after all, he's the symbol of the American Dream... it's supposed to stand out and inspire people!"

Angelina DeSade:

"A shaved head and a big metal shield? What more need be said? The man is primed and ready for a night of clubbing in Los Angeles or New York!"

Why Don't Super Heroes Have Zits?

You would imagine that getting blasted by cosmic rays interdimensional flux-warps, stasis generating enervators or any other type of hyper-technical method of gaining super human powers would help rid six teenage heroes of their problems with acne

No such luck

That's why the NEW WARRIORS know that when unsightly acne has them down, there's still one chance left

These youngsters know how to wage war on crime, but when it comes to waging war on excess oil deposits pimp-es and b ackheads — they know they'l need help — and they know where to turn

ROXXEE-10 is the most effective weapon against acne because only ROXXEE-10 contains ammonium trig ycerlde red dye #5, riboflavin, uranium, hydrochloric acid, tec thin oat bran and DDT — the most powerful and proven chemicals used to combat oily skin

ROXXEE-10

THE ULTIMATE NULLIFIER

A WARRIOR'S APPROACH TO THE WAR ON PIMPLES

A Product of ROXXON International

X-FACTOR vs. THE PUBLIC

New York's New Mutant Group Fights for Public Acceptance

All super-groups have their battles. The media are always aware of the struggles that involve so-called super-villains, or even groups of super-villains, not to mention the ones that involve more day-to-day crime and criminals. There is, however, a battle that all superhero groups share, and that's the one for public acceptance. It's a battle that not all super-groups survive, but the ones that do become legends. The AVENGERS are a perfect example; in the 70s they "fought" the government as well as the public for acceptance. Their West Coast counterparts did the same in the early 80s. Even as far back as the 40s, this particular battle has raged. Our older readers may remember the INVADERS, the LIBERTY LEGION, or even the ALL-WINNERS SQUAD. On the other hand, some super-groups haven't fared so well. Groups like the DEFENDERS and the CHAMPIONS have gone the way of the dodo, partially due to their loss of public favor.

There is at present yet another superhero group struggling to stay afloat in the deluge of media hype and tides of public opinion — the Manhattan-based mutant team consisting of *Cyclops*, *Marvel Girl*, *Ice Man*, *Archangel*, and the *Beast*, known as X-FACTOR.

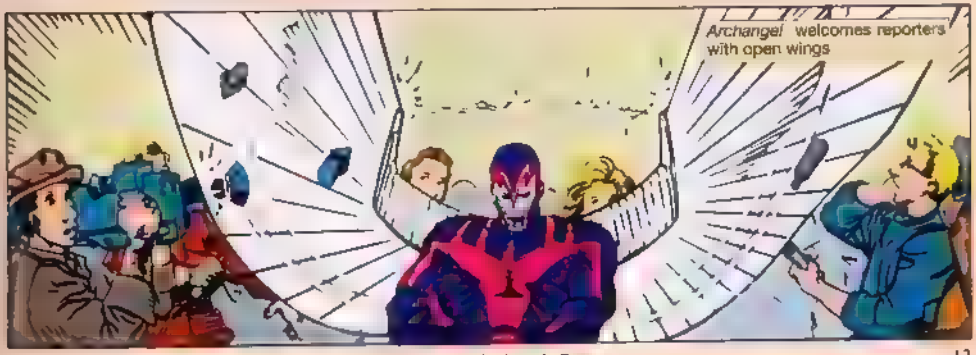
X-FACTOR had a shaky start not so long ago when mutant hysteria was at its peak and the Mutant Registration Act went into effect. Since that time, they've volleyed back and forth between public acceptance and rejection. Just when it seemed as if they had landed on the winning side for good, it looks as if their viability is in question ... again.

Their swing into this last bout of popularity began in England (London, to be exact). American journalists reported X-FACTOR's triumphant rescue of a kidnapped youth. What they didn't report was the extreme damage done to some historic streets in the town of Fog, or the giant lead statues left behind in Hyde Park (sculptures of giant trolls — supposedly the boy's kidnappers). Regardless, the American press and public ate it up. However, before the group could enjoy the benefits of their new-found popularity, they vanished. And for quite a while, too. As it is with most media stars, the less the public saw of them, the more they wanted to see. So it was no surprise that when X-FACTOR finally came back from wherever it was they were, the media swarmed around them.

He was once *Warren Worthington III*, playboy millionaire, and heroic winged mutant known as Angel. He recently adapted a name to fit his more menacing image. *Archangel* has been as much a mystery as he has been a media terror. With the name and costume change have also come temper tantrums and public outbursts. A case in point was the display he made on their arrival home (see photo). Once again, thousands of dollars of damage, but no one hurt. In the weeks that followed their return, Archangel's behavior became more and more alarming. In fact, it took the combined effort of his teammates to put an end to the "reign of terror" which supposedly included a bout of terrorizing bank tellers. The doctors and nurses at St. Vincent's emergency room don't have any kind words to say about Archangel, as he busted up the private room where he was being detained. Despite all the trouble this questionable member of X-FACTOR caused, the NYPD has nothing but *nice* things to say about the winged hero. *Officer Schulty* of the 16th Precinct said, in response to accusations that Archangel's actions were uncalled for after the "landing" in Manhattan, "X-FACTOR saved our butts, man!" Favorable testimony, to be sure.

Who will have the final say in the matter of Archangel's and X-FACTOR's popularity? Are they heroes, or are they just glorified public vandals? Is the damage they do to the city of New York and the world equal to the good they do? As always, it will be the public — that finicky, unpredictable mass that is the pulse of this nation, if not the planet. The judgment will be made soon, depending on the outcome of the current tribulations with the city-state of Genosha. When that judgment is passed, it will be either their final demise or their second genesis.

— *Dana Russell*

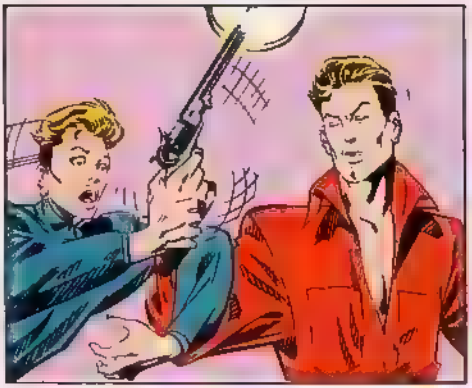


6TH RICHEST MAN IN WORLD ATTEMPTS SUICIDE:

Desmond Marrs Claims He's Bored to Death

The feared wizard of Wall Street, *Desmond Marrs*, almost made himself history recently when he allegedly attempted to blow his brains out. His weapon of choice *this* time (there have been rumors of similar unsuccessful attempts) was an antique COLT pistol from his gun collection. In a scene that would have won the Melodramatic Award of the Year had it played to a public audience, Des's sister, *Phoebe Marrs*, arrived in time to spoil his aim.

Apparently the burden of being the 6th richest man in the world has proven to be too great for him to bear. From a source within their household staff we learned that he told his sister that he wished to end his thoroughly inconsequential and boring existence. "I'm like *Alexander the Great*!" he said. "I have conquered the world! And I have no worlds left to conquer!" It is to his enemies' regret that Desmond did not emulate *Hemingway* who, believing the same, was far more successful. Regardless, thanks to his sister's efforts, Des has a new world to conquer, so to speak, in the form of a challenge offered by the AVENGER, *Prince Namor*, who is making a spectacular environmental name for himself in the business world.



Artist's rendition of the probable event.

MARC SPECTOR MURDER TRIAL:

Mercenary Past Comes Back to Haunt Millionaire

Marc Spector stands accused of murder.

Not since the United States invaded Panama in order to capture and bring to trial *General Manuel Noriega*, has there been as sensational a display of strong-arm tactics committed in the name of justice. The revolutionary government of Bosqueverde hired SILVER SABLE, INTERNATIONAL to abduct the millionaire *Marc Spector* and bring him to Bosqueverde to stand trial.

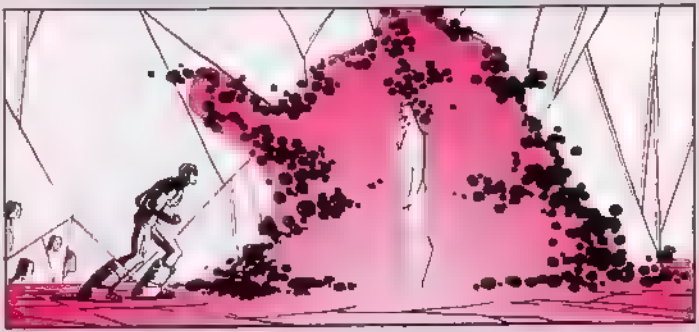
The reasons for Marc Spector's abduction had to do with his mercenary past. And the event that saw him almost finish his life at the end of a hangman's noose was his role years ago in the killing of Bosqueverde's president, *Ricardo Domingues*, and his assistance in the installation of the rapacious *Emmanuel Rodrigo Raposa* as dictator.

The evidence, and Spector's own confession to the killing of Domingues, seemed certain to seal Spector's fate. And in fact Spector was condemned to death. But to the astonishment and outrage of the audience, Bosqueverde's new leader, *President Silva*, exercised his constitutional authority and pardoned Spector. Speculation is that the super hero, *Moon Knight*, had a hand in President Silva's decision. But no one has been able to verify it. But what must be a relief for Marc Spector is the fact that he is free to continue his life. And equally safe to do so.

NEW IRON MAN TAKES OVER STARK ENTERPRISES?

Where Is Anthony Stark?

The relationship between playboy inventor and entrepreneur *Anthony Stark* and his AVENGER bodyguard, the new *Iron Man*, is as complex as Stark's was with the original Iron Man. Right now, with an erratic-acting Tony Stark having disappeared and his high tech corporation, STARK ENTERPRISES going through a series of severe crises, close friends and business associates are turning to Iron Man for answers. At least, they'd like to turn to Iron Man, but the armored Avenger has been so busy battling a number of the Avengers' adversaries, on both the East and West Coasts, that no one dares go near him. Until such time as Iron Man gets a well-earned breather, everyone else will have to wait and hope. Surprisingly, during this time of crisis, the stock in Stark's namesake company is stronger than ever.



Iron Man tries to save STARK INTERNATIONAL complex from destruction by the living Laser.

NEW SUPER-HEROINE ON THE BLOCK

Drives Everyone Batty with her Media Blitz

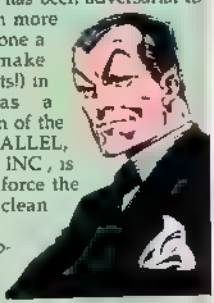
If the American way nowadays is to mediate oneself to prominence, then *Nosferata*, the bat-motif obsessed (and apparently very rich) super-heroine based in Visigoth, Massachusetts, has done just that. Whether or not her bat symbol blitz will scare the bejeezus out of criminals, or cause them to laugh all the way out of the burglarized bank, still remains to be seen. Certainly it doesn't hurt her credibility to be seen fighting the dangerous *Jack Serious* with the aid of the super-heroine AVENGER, the *She-Hulk*.

But does she have the moxy to take on some of the real heavy hitters faced by super heroes such as *Iron Man*, *Captain America*, et al? And then, of course, one additional question remains to be answered — what's Nosferata going to do for Halloween?

PRINCE NAMOR — FRIEND OF MANKIND?

Uses New Corporate Clout to Save the Earth

In another stunning business move, *Prince Namor* paid $10 billion to take over the PARALLEL CONGLOMERATE. Namor, whose past association with mankind has been adversarial to the point of open war on more than one occasion, has done a remarkable image remake (without media consultants!) in presenting himself as a mankind-saving champion of the environment. And PARALLEL, now renamed ORACLE, INC., is the key to his efforts to force the business community to clean up its environmental act.



Prince Namor, the environmentalist knight on Wall Street?

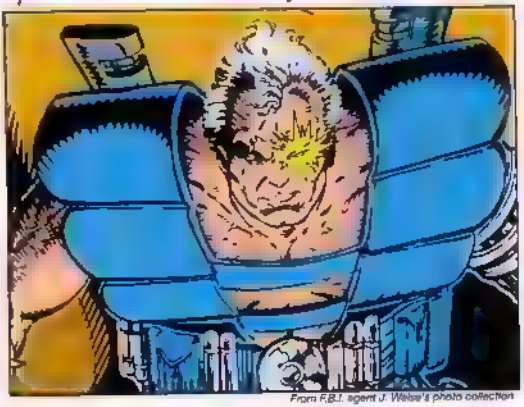
Namor has not publicly revealed what the source of his personal funds which financed the takeover of Parallel were, but the most persistent rumor is that Namor knows the exact whereabouts of every sunken treasure ship in all the oceans. If this is true, there may be some maritime insurance companies who might wish to give him a call, to say nothing of the various salvage crews still searching for the wreck of *Columbus's SANTA MARIA*. ☒

— Dwight Jon Zimmerman

THERE'S A MAN CALLED CABLE

A Reporter In Pursuit Of Shadows

The following is the last in what was supposed to be a series of reports by MYIR freelance writer Christopher Autumn, concerning the U.S. government's alleged use of non affiliated "superpowered" personnel in top secret activities



From F.B.I. agent J. Weise's photo collection

Keep your eyes open for a man named *CABLE*. Doubtless most of you have no idea who he is, what he's done, or who he's done it to. I don't profess to know everything about the man, but what little I do know I will relate now, just in case my ongoing investigations are interrupted.

I first met the man Cable while he was involved in a messy little international skirmish a number of years back. He was a legend among the Intelligence Community even then. I won't bother telling you when or where this incident took place because you haven't heard of *it*, either. It officially never happened, ask anyone.

Cable fascinated me instantly, but he had a way of vanishing. Years of following false trails, torched warehouses, shot-up bars, and 110 degree jungles — I would always be, on my best days, just a step behind him. Don't bother asking anyone at "that agency" he worked for. You see, Cable doesn't officially exist; ask anyone.

I had just about given up hope of finding him when a funny thing happened. Cable stepped, briefly, into the sunlight. Does anyone remember some 'page 3' articles about the MUTANT LIBERATION FRONT? No? Okay, so it's not easy to keep track of mutant groups these days, good, evil or otherwise, but bear with me.

The MLF went around for a while blowing up government research facilities (apparently this somehow liberates mutants, although how, I don't know). They killed a bunch of people and broke two "teen" mutants out of federal prison. Ring any bells? Anyway, according to a guard who was working at one of the aforementioned laboratories, a man calling himself Cable went in after the terrorists. Cable apparently didn't fare so well, as the place blew sky high within minutes of his arrival. (Hey, it's okay for the hero to fail, it's the 90s!) BOOM! End of the Cable saga.

Later that same day, the prison hospital holding the two young mutants — known as *Rusty* and *Skids*, wards of the mutant group X-FACTOR — was attacked by the MLF, who had formerly demanded the release of said prisoners. But guess who showed up? Correct again. Cable. What occurred inside the prison is anyone's guess. No word on X FACTOR'S wards, nothing on the MLF, and absolutely nothing on Cable. So don't ask me how he wound up climbing out of the East River the next day with Uncle Sam's very own FREEDOM FORCE right behind him. How did I find this out and how do I know it was him? A blessed superhero junkie tourist with a Kodak disk camera happened to be in the right place at the right time, and got the best darned picture of the man I've ever seen. And how many white-haired, metal-armed fugitives with facial scars and glowing eyes could there be in New York City? All right, fifteen, tops. But I'd know that face anywhere.

Since then Cable's modus operandi has returned to normal. He disappeared for a while, then there was a shaky report that placed Cable in Madripoor side by side with Japan's self proclaimed super hero, *Sunfire*, and a group of kids with superhuman abilities (oh great, *new* mutants!). According to the official report courtesy of the Japanese government, Sunfire *singlehandedly* stopped the MUTANT LIBERATION FRONT from poisoning the major cities of the world with a new drug dubbed SLEET. He also stopped the MLF killing their leader, *Stryfe*, in the process. When I questioned the Japanese Government directly about Cable's alleged involvement, they patiently explained to me that no one by that name was involved. It seems that Cable doesn't really exist. Ask anyone.

As stated in the opening, this was the last report Mr. Autumn filed before his untimely disappearance several weeks ago. Chris was considered to be one of **Marvel Year In Review***'s most dedicated freelancers. His professionalism was no end. So, when MYIR received the above article we felt it necessary to do some investigating of our own.*

Former C.I.A. agent **Trevor Brown** *confirms the involvement of a "freelance agent" in concerns with the international incident described in the article above, but would not confirm or deny the involvement of an agent named Cable. F.B.I agent* **Jack Weise** *provided not only conformation on an agent's involvement with the FREEDOM FORCE, but supplied pictures of said agent as well. The pictures are stills from security cameras inside FREEDOM FORCE'S detention center. Mr. Weise never mentioned the name of the agent. When MYIR attempted to contact Mr. Weise, we were told he had been called back to active duty, as was Mr. Brown, to help with the recent Genoshan crisis.*

— C. Autumn with D. Russell

J. JONAH JAMESON STARTS NEWS MAGAZINE

Spider-Man Primary Target

Just when everyone, especially *Spider-Man*, thought that with the loss of the DAILY BUGLE newspaper, the "Mouth of New York" had finally been muzzled, *J. Jonah Jameson* returned as publisher of a new news magazine, THE JAMESON NEWS DIGEST. And true to form, the first issue took full aim and bashed Spider-Man. Many of the old DAILY BUGLE staffers are now working at Jameson's new publication, including editor in chief *Robbie Robertson*. It remains to be seen if Jameson can use Spider-Man to carry the circulation of his new magazine the way it did his former newspaper. But one thing's for certain - it won't be for lack of trying.

CONVICTED NEWSPAPER HEAD PARDONED

Robbie Robertson Freed by President

The President of the United States issued an executive pardon to former DAILY BUGLE editor in chief *Robbie Robertson*. Robertson had been convicted of a felony for failing to report a murder he had witnessed twenty years ago allegedly committed by *Lonnie Lincoln*, A.K.A. *Tombstone*. Despite the experience, Robertson's respected reputation appears intact. Both *Thomas Fireheart*, the new owner of THE DAILY BUGLE and Jameson fell over each other in their efforts to lure him. Robertson chose to work for his old boss, Jameson. Will Robertson write a book about his experience? It is known that he kept a diary during his incarceration, and book publishers are already lining up with six figure contracts.

Robbie Robertson (center) at home celebrating his first night of freedom with family, friends and business associates.

FRAUDULENT SPIDER-MAN PHOTOS?

Famed Photographer of Spider-Man Caught "Cheating"

Once again grabbing the headlines for that famous arachnid, *Peter Parker*, the photo-journalist famous for his photographs of the super hero, *Spider-Man*, and author of the best-selling book of Spider-Man photos, WEBS, got into some journalistic hot water recently. It seems that his rival, photographer *Nick Katzenberg*, took some shots of Peter dressed as Spider-Man and when he showed them to THE JAMESON NEWS DIGEST publisher *J. Jonah Jameson* and editor in chief *Robbie Robertson*, the suspicion was cast that Parker may have faked other photos of Spider-Man. Despite Parker's explanation that the photo was done as a public service ad for THE DAILY BUGLE, Robertson, claiming that Parker's actions violated the journalistic ethic of trust, angrily barred Parker from the JAMESON NEWS MAGAZINE.

The situation became even more bitter when Jameson shortly thereafter overruled his editor in chief and purchased, for the cover of the first issue, a photo of Spider-Man shot by Parker. Eventually Robertson and Parker were reconciled when Robertson confessed that he saw in Peter's actions a reflection of his own ethical compromise when he witnessed a murder and didn't report it for twenty years.

MUTANT MOVIE MAKES BIG SCREEN

"Bedazzled," Starring Dazzler, Discovered in Warehouse

A studio auction purchase turned into a real treasure find for film wunderkind, *Freddie Stanachek*, who walked away with the original print and title to "Bedazzled" the film starring the notorious mutant X-Man, *Alison Blaire*, aka, *the Dazzler*. And when it was discovered that the Dazzler hadn't died in Dallas with her fellow X-MEN and was staging a singing career comeback, it seemed that Stanachek, who was also a big fan of Ms. Blaire's, had the makings of a big hit on his hands. At least that's what BARON FOX STUDIOS thought. And they backed their belief with a major distribution contract. The quality of the film rests primarily in the notorious celebrity of the star's reputation as a mutant—and the charms of her obvious physical beauty, emphasis on the physical. Regardless, the film is guaranteed to pull in a substantial profit, especially in video, regardless of its quality. ☒

—Dwight Jon Zimmerman

MEDIA-MEDIA-MEDIA-

IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN and Dumb . . .

. . . or is it Gray and Smart . . . . . . or is it Green and Smart . . . ?

If *we're* confused, think how *Dr Banner* must feel!

The Incredible Hulk. The very mention of the name used to strike terror into the hearts of people everywhere Nowadays, that terror is mixed with — confusion

Last year, the rampaging brute resurfaced after a long absence in which he was believed dead. The green goliath turned up in Las Vegas, of all places, posing as an enforcer. But the real shock was his change of appearance — he was gray! Not only was he gray, but he made rude comments. Well, that may have all changed now.

During a confrontation with a mysterious, unknown assailant, the man behind the Hulk, physicist Dr. Bruce Banner, apparently transformed into the raging green monster of old. Witnesses report that Banner was attempting to reach his estranged wife, Betty Ross-Banner

"It was brutal," explained one eyewitness. "I've never seen such rage I thought the Hulk was powerful, but this guy could scare the mask off of Dr. Doom."

A later confrontation outside a convent in Connecticut produced even more startling Hulk facts The United States Army, aided by Hulk specialist and noted psychologist Dr. Leonard Samson, attempted to rein in the Hulk once and for all. Hoping to capture Banner in daylight, the army was surprised to encounter the gray Hulk. Earlier reports had concluded that this manifestation of the Hulk only occurred at night.

According to Samson, "Banner is a multiple personality disorder case. He is now manifesting both Hulks on a highly irregular basis. I can't be sure what this means, but unless we help Banner soon, there'll be no helping him."

Since then, allegations have been made that Samson did indeed catch up to the Hulk and "shrink" him. Unconfirmed reports indicate that, quite possibly, Banner and the two Hulks have been combined into a huge conglomerate being of great strength AND intelligence AND cunning — characteristic patterns of all three persons

Could this mean the Hulk is now more dangerous than ever? Or does it mean he's gone for good? Highly speculative rumors have placed him in the company of some sort of secretive organization. The Pentagon would not release any information they may have in regards to this organization, but denied any connections to what they suspect may be another global terrorist group.

Samson, possibly the only key to the Hulk's current whereabouts, had no comment on the current status of the creature. He is currently under heavy surveillance and suspicion of malpractice. Neither could Banner's now-missing wife be reached for comment.

The Hulk's reappearance coincides very nearly to those of noted mystic Dr Strange and the Atlantean, Namor the Sub-Mariner Since all three once served together in the now defunct Defenders, speculation runs heavy about possible links or connections in the three cases. However, aside from a few unconfirmed reports of the three working in unison in New York, there is no evidence to support this theory

Still, the Hulk remains at large. Whether he is plotting some terrible form of world conquest, smashing brick walls, or simply curling up on a davenport reading a tattered copy of "Wuthering Heights," none can say. Only one thing is certain — as long as there is a Hulk, the potential threat he poses is too great to be ignored

- Gary Barnum

A NICK OFF THE OLD BLOCK:

Building a Better SHIELD

It was a year of rebuilding for *Nick Fury*, head of the super-secret spy orgnization known as SHIELD. The old SHIELD organization was disbanded a few years ago, thus leaving Nick Fury to start SHIELD up anew. Last year, Fury reorganized SHIELD from scratch, starting out with a hand-picked team of Fury's most trusted friends and associates.

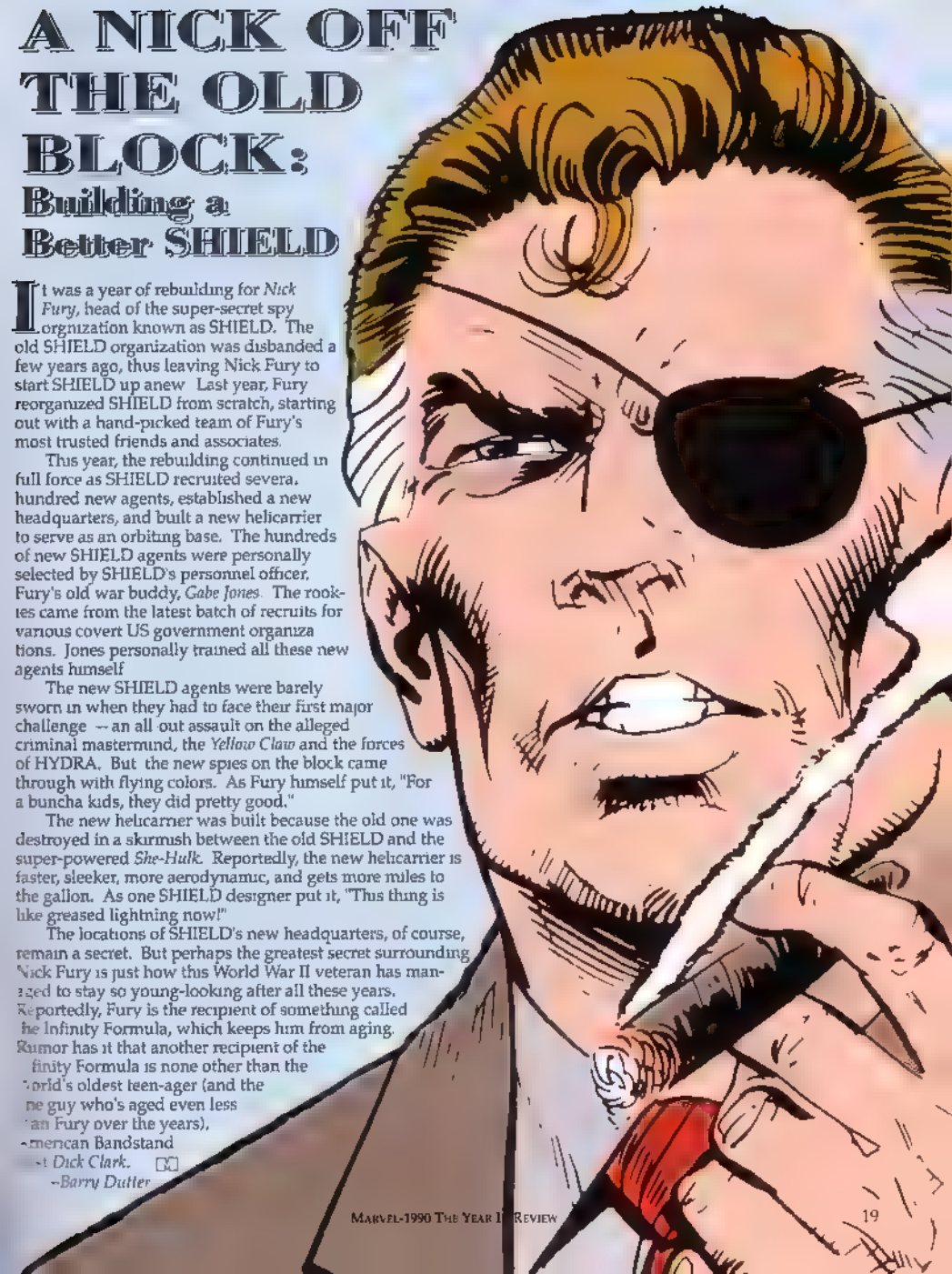
This year, the rebuilding continued in full force as SHIELD recruited several hundred new agents, established a new headquarters, and built a new helicarrier to serve as an orbiting base. The hundreds of new SHIELD agents were personally selected by SHIELD's personnel officer, Fury's old war buddy, *Gabe Jones*. The rookies came from the latest batch of recruits for various covert US government organizations. Jones personally trained all these new agents himself.

The new SHIELD agents were barely sworn in when they had to face their first major challenge -- an all-out assault on the alleged criminal mastermind, the *Yellow Claw* and the forces of HYDRA. But the new spies on the block came through with flying colors. As Fury himself put it, "For a buncha kids, they did pretty good."

The new helicarrier was built because the old one was destroyed in a skirmish between the old SHIELD and the super-powered *She-Hulk*. Reportedly, the new helicarrier is faster, sleeker, more aerodynamic, and gets more miles to the gallon. As one SHIELD designer put it, "This thing is like greased lightning now!"

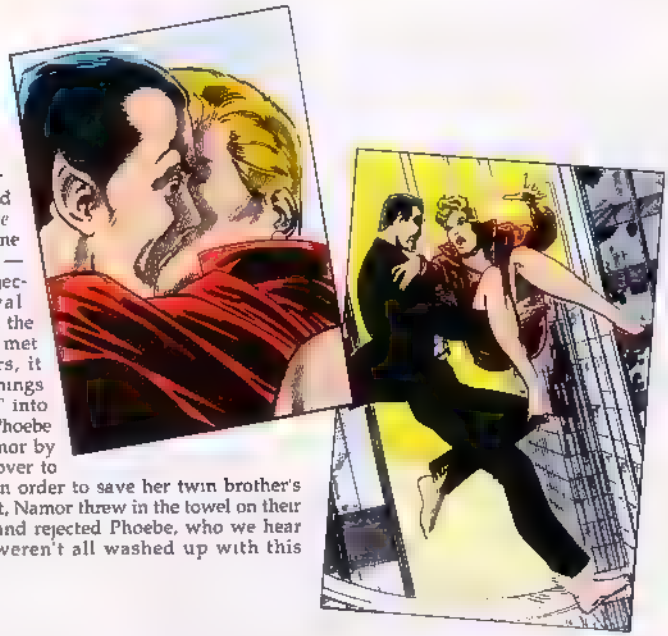
The locations of SHIELD's new headquarters, of course, remain a secret. But perhaps the greatest secret surrounding Nick Fury is just how this World War II veteran has managed to stay so young-looking after all these years. Reportedly, Fury is the recipient of something called the Infinity Formula, which keeps him from aging. Rumor has it that another recipient of the Infinity Formula is none other than the world's oldest teen-ager (and the one guy who's aged even less than Fury over the years), American Bandstand host *Dick Clark*. ☒

--*Barry Dutter*



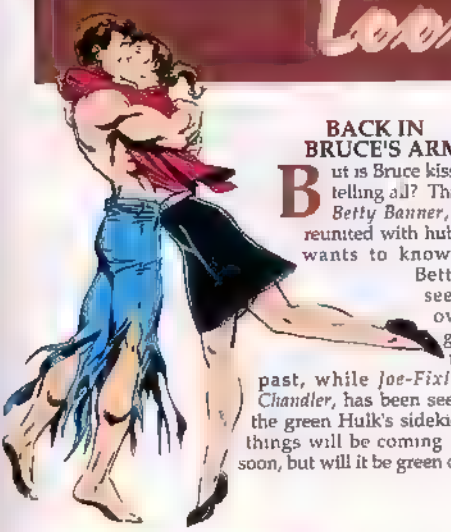
Loose Lips

Archangel's spirit's been getting a lift lately — he's been keeping company with a certain New York City Police officer by the name of *Charlotte Jones*. After Archangel (a member of the X-FACTOR team) saved her life from a gang of ruthless street kids, she saved him from the soul-stealing RAVENS. Now they've decided that there's more to their relationship than heroics. Looks like a match made in *heaven*.



Namor and *Phoebe Marrs*... this one had it all — attraction, rejection, betrayal. When Namor, the *Sub-Mariner*, met Phoebe Marrs, it looked like things were "falling" into place. Then Phoebe betrayed Namor by turning him over to Headhunter in order to save her twin brother's life. After that, Namor threw in the towel on their relationship and rejected Phoebe, who we hear wishes she weren't all washed up with this Atlantean.

Loose Lips



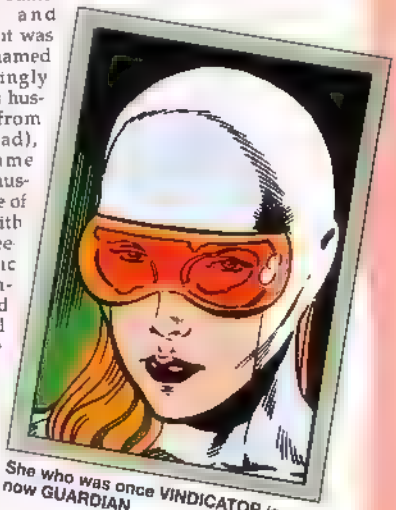
BACK IN BRUCE'S ARMS!

But is Bruce kissing and telling all? That's what *Betty Banner*, recently reunited with hubby *Bruce*, wants to know. Seems Betty's been seeing green over certain gray matters in Bruce's past, while *Joe-Fixit*'s ex, *Marlo Chandler*, has been seeing *Rick Jones*, the green Hulk's sidekick. Looks like things will be coming to a head real soon, but will it be green or gray?

DEADLY DIAMONDS

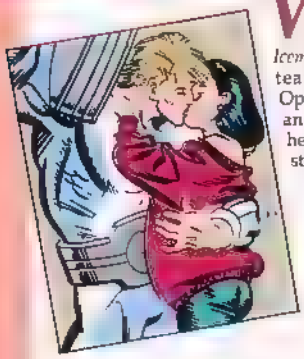
Who's the dashing damsel donning diamonds — the one dining and dancing with dynamic do-gooder *Captain America*? Do her deadly diamonds divulge her duplicitous nature? Dare we say it's definitely — *Diamondback*?

Keeping track of the recent romantic history of certain members of the Canadian super hero team, ALPHA FLIGHT, is not a task for beginners. Linked in the rumor mill were *Box* and *Diamond Lil*. Then, it was Box and the then-named *Vindicator*. Amazingly enough, Vindicator's husband came back (from the presumed dead), Vindicator became *Guardian*, and her husband took on the title of Vindicator. Still with us? In this Doe-see-doing of romantic partners, one wonders what Diamond Lil's next move will be. We predict the return of the "Box" step.



She who was once VINDICATOR is now GUARDIAN

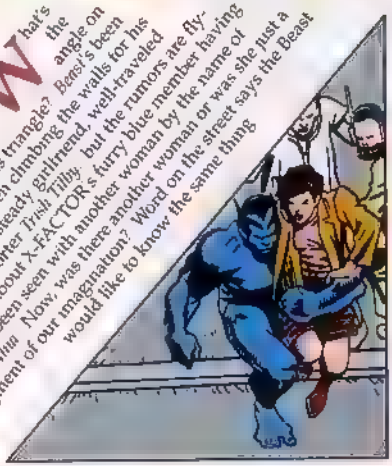
Loose Lips



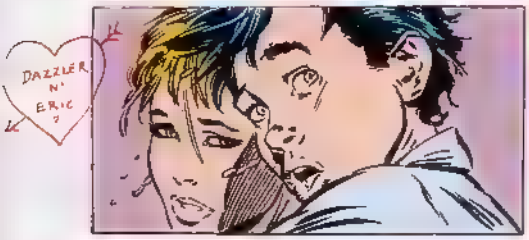
We know someone who's *not* getting the cold shoulder from *Iceman* (also of the X-FACTOR team) and that someone is Opal. The couple met recently and their relationship's been heating up ever since. Pretty steamy stuff

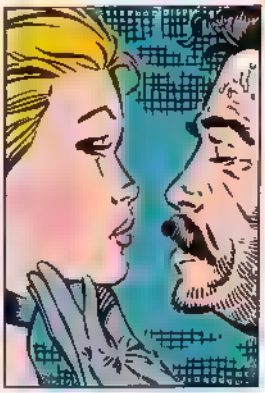
SYNTHIA
The other woman?

What's the angle on this triangle? *Beast*'s been seen climbing the walls for his steady girlfriend, well-traveled reporter *Trish Tilby*, but the rumors are flying about X-FACTOR's furry blue member having been seen with another woman by the name of *Synthia*. Now, was there another woman or was she just a figment of our imagination? Word on the street says the Beast would like to know the same thing

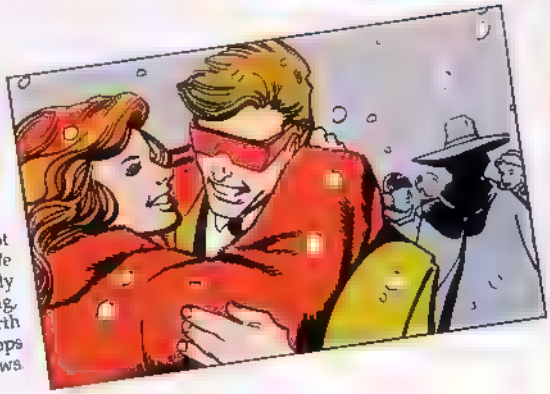


Loose Lips





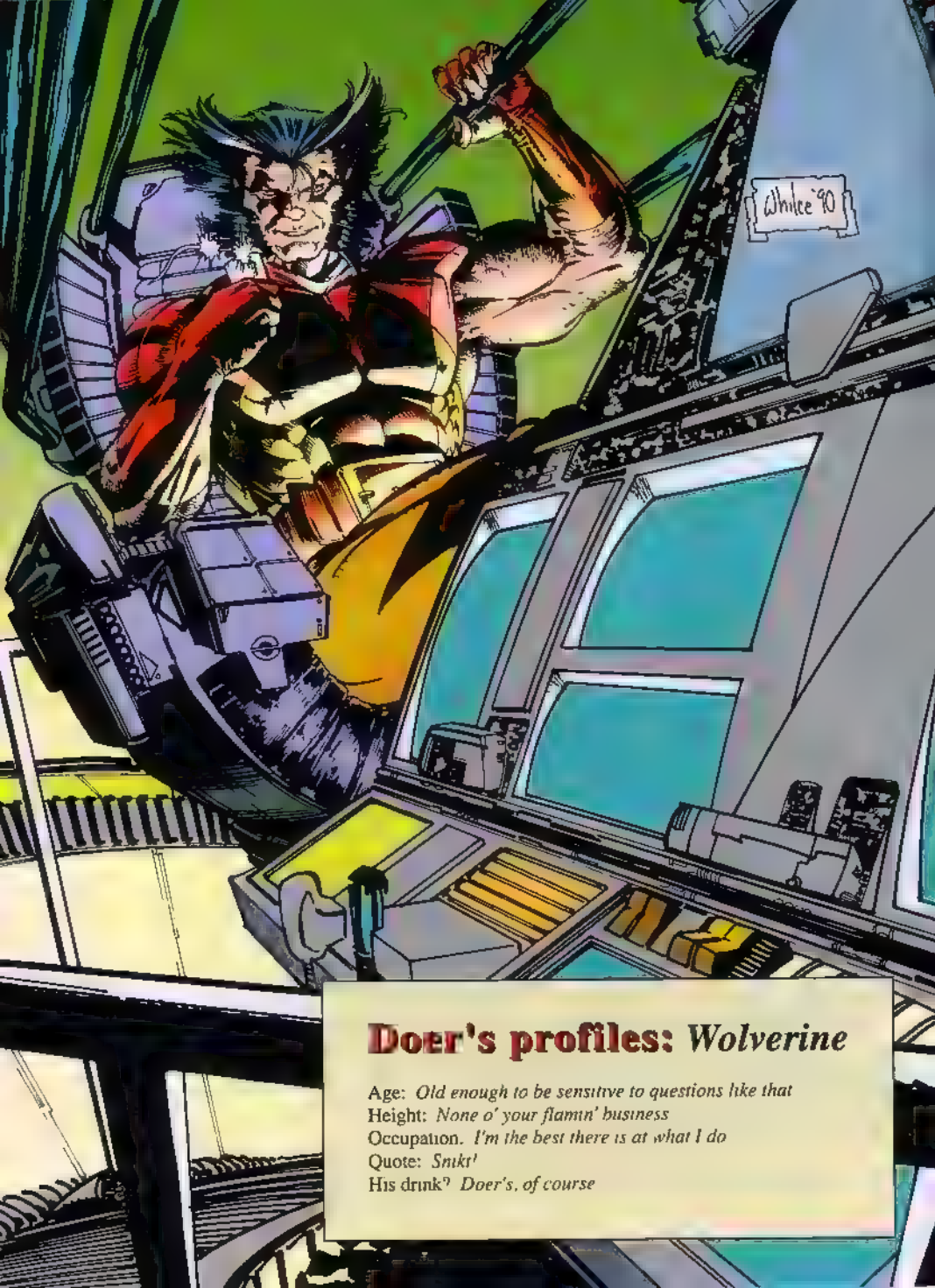
Dazzled by Dazzler, or a case of fatal attraction? Both! Talk about boy trouble — one wants to possess her and one wants to kill her. While *Freddie* wants to be much more than a friend, *Eric Beale* is still planning an end to her career and her life! Looks like the only safe place for Dazzler is on stage.



Something old, something new, something borrowed, some team members finally going to get married?

Marvel Girl and *Cyclops* have certainly kept us waiting for the altar. We still can't tell you exactly when wedding bells will ring, but some things are worth waiting for — as Cyclops already knows.

They say old flames die hard. Could we be seeing the rekindling of a college romance? Once the object of a schoolgirl crush, *Brent Wilcox* might just be the new target of *She Hulk*'s affections. And what She-Hulk wants, She-Hulk gets!



Doer's profiles: *Wolverine*

Age: *Old enough to be sensitive to questions like that*
Height: *None o' your flamin' business*
Occupation. *I'm the best there is at what I do*
Quote: *Snikt!*
His drink? *Doer's, of course*

DEATHLOK'S RAMPAGE:

IS HE A COLD BLOODED KILLING MACHINE OR A MISUNDERSTOOD HERO?

Watch out Punisher, there's a new vigilante on the block! Half man. Half machine. All action. His name is Deathlok, and he's set his sights on criminals wherever they may be.

Rumors of a "robo-vigilante" began surfacing a few months ago in the Coney Island section of Brooklyn. This reporter was able to locate a man who claims to have given shelter to Deathlok and to have helped him battle hi-tech assassins at Coney Island's amusement center. The man would only give us his first name — *Jesus*." He told me the following. "Deathlok? Yeah, not only have I heard of him, I've lived with the guy. He's one cool dude. He saved me from getting my head bashed in from a gang of thugs. He said he had no place to go, so I put him up for a couple of nights. He told me he was once a human working for some kind of high tech company. He said he got involved in things he wasn't supposed to and so they killed him and put his brain into the Deathlok body. I don't really know much more than that."

This reporter has done some further digging based on Jesus's statement, and gang, you ain't gonna believe the rest of the story. It seems that Deathlok worked for a company called CYBERTEK SYSTEMS INC., a subsidiary company of ROXXON OIL. CYBERTEK was run by *Harlan Ryker*. It is he who is implicated in Deathlok's attack, in the South American country of ESTRELLA, on rebels opposed to the building of a dam that would lead to the extermination of an Indian village and the death of a rain forest. It should be noted that the dam project was financed by ROXXON OIL.

Shortly after his sightings in Estrella, Deathlok was linked to violent confrontations in Kobe, Japan, where he confronted and defeated an army of ninja soldiers and battled Japan's super patriot, *Shuro Yoshida* a.k.a. *Sunfire*.

Harlan Ryker was linked to Yoshida and a man named *Yoritomo*. Yoritomo had tricked Sunfire into helping him set up an arms deal with Ryker. In this deal, Ryker would trade CYBERTEK's latest weapons for an undisclosed amount of money deposited into a private bank account.

But thanks to Deathlok, both Ryker and Yoritomo were taken into custody by *Nick Fury* and his agents of S.H.I.E.L.D., who had been investigating Ryker for some time. When we questioned ROXXON representatives about the Deathlok project, we were told that "ROXXON only develops projects that better man's existence." When asked about the whereabouts of Deathlok, Col. Fury gave a terse "no comment" and walked away.

There have been no further substantiated sightings of Deathlok at this writing, but we're betting that as long as there is injustice in the world, Deathlok will be there to fight it!

Eric Fein

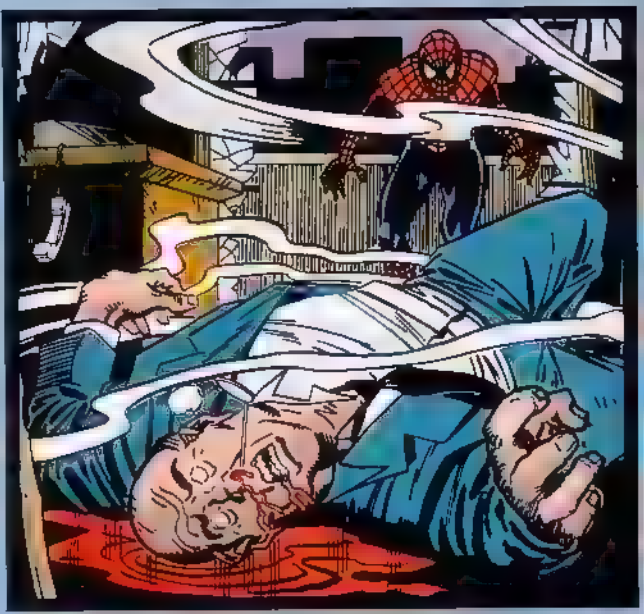
FOR WHOM DOES THE BELL TOLL?

NOT FOR SUPER HUMANS . . .

Since the dawn of time, people have attempted to better understand — and therefore better avoid — death. The mythological Fountain of Youth, innumerable pantheons of immortal beings called gods, potions of invulnerability, reincarnation as animals, past lives . humans have always been obsessed with their own demise But only recently has it become clear how to avoid death

Get a "super power," dress up in bright-colored underwear, and give yourself a code name

Because, as risky and downright dangerous as it may seem to be a "super hero" or a "super criminal," the number of occurrences of permanent death among these folks is incredibly low, nearly to the point of nonexistence! That's right - "permanent death." It may seem like a redundant term to most people, but to super humans, the word *death* must always be qualified. Because super humans don't die; they just rest a while and come back in a new, improved costume.



THE ARRANGER — Okay, now *this* guy is definitely dead. But he's got a funky code name, so don't send flowers just yet . . .

HARD TO KILL

The first step in this zany process is, of course, to *kill* the super human in question. The infliction of damage necessary for this act can range from a knife or bullet wound (inflicted on, say, *Hawkeye* of the AVENGERS) to a direct hit with a nuclear missile (to off the *Incredible Hulk*, for example) or something even more powerful (like using an atom-stripping proton ray on the *Silver Surfer*)

Unfortunately, these guys seem incredibly good at getting out of the way of most things you'll throw at them, and hitting you first. Try sneaking up on *Spider-Man*, and you're likely to get a web sandwich Aim a bazooka at the *She-Hulk* and you're probably going to be walking pretty funny for a while Drop a bomb on the *Juggernaut* and — no, actually, don't. It's not a good idea, trust us.

Even an apparently human-and-nothing-else character like the *Punisher* is amazingly difficult to kill Think about it — he's basically just a *guy* who shoots people. His scores of hits on crack houses, street gangs and muggers have been documented in the popular press for years now. How can *one man* declare a war on crime and not get plugged sooner or later?

Is it the costume? Is it the wonky "super-code name?" Is it the fact that the Punisher is so crazy that he does the totally unexpected, keeping his foes constantly off-balance? Or does the Punisher have a "really, really good luck" super power?

They beat the living crap out of each other on a regular basis, suffer major injuries and teeter on the brink of death quite a bit . . but, in general, super humans are very much like Weebles. They wobble, but they don't fall down

DEATHS & RESURRECTIONS

VIGOR MORTIS

Every so often, though, one of the super humans *does* shuffle off this mortal coil — at least in appearance. A superhuman dies, his heart stops, he stops breathing, he is buried, his friends mourn him and go on with their lives. End of story?

No, not usually.

More often than not (if you don't believe it, see the chart accompanying this article) the superbeing in question will be back, sooner or later, in one form or another.

We all watched, horrified, as the X-MEN died on national TV two years ago. Now, not only are they back from the dead, but there are even *more* of them!

The criminal known only as *Jigsaw*, killed by the aforementioned Punisher, came back a mere month later to punish his executioner!

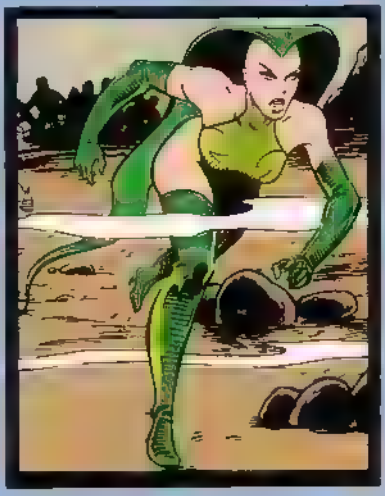
The Roxxon-sponsored cyborg *Deathlok* re-emerged this year, though his resurrection seems little more than flipping the switch back 'on.

Vindicator, formerly dead former leader of the Canadian super hero team ALPHA FLIGHT, is now alive again.

SHIELD agent *Timothy "Dum Dum" Dugan*, killed a little over a year ago by unidentified attackers, is rumored to be back.

Kraven the Hunter, who killed himself with a rifle several years ago, has been seen walking the streets of New York City (well, most of him, anyway).

And this is by no means a comprehensive list; there are surely many more apparent resurrections that *weren't* picked up by the media. Many reporters covering the "super hero" beat keep charts near their desks — and they always seem to use those *erasable* markers.



MADAME HYDRA — She's dead, Jim . . . Or is she?

GRIM'S FISH TALES

It's ironic in a grating kind of way that super humans, who cause untold injuries and property damage for us 'normal' folks, have apparently defeated our oldest and most feared enemy. Not only do these metahumans get to fly around like birds, punch holes through walls and travel to the ends of time and space, but they also have the immortality market cornered!

One can easily imagine the Grim Reaper cursing in frustration at the difficulty in obtaining and retaining the souls of these super beings. And one can almost feel compassion for Death, constantly thinking of the ones who got away.

Almost.

Evan Skolnick

DIED THIS YEAR

NIL 10
JIGSAW
MYSTIQUE
MADAME HYDRA
THE ARRANGER
WARLOCK (OF NEW MUTANTS)

BACK FROM THE DEAD THIS YEAR

THANOS
GHOST RIDER
DUM DUM DUGAN
THE YELLOW CLAW
SUPER SKRULL
JIGSAW
WARRIOR WOMAN
MASTER MAN
DEATHLOK
VINDICATOR
KRAVEN (?)
THE GRIM REAPER
FOOLKILLER
GREEN GOBLIN

DIED AND STILL DEAD (SO FAR)

BUCKY
BARON ZEMO (ORIGINAL)
TORO
THE SWORDSMAN
THUNDERBIRD
THE WHIZZER (ORIGINAL)
MARVEL BOY (ORIGINAL)
TORPEDO
THE FLY
THE WRAITH
TITANIA (ORIGINAL)

THE GHOST RIDER:

Spirit of Vengeance Or Spook of the Devil?

He's baaack.

The perfidious poltergeist who punishes punks has possessed a person. Again. Or so it seems.

Recent reports from Brooklyn, New York, have led experts in the supernatural field to speculate that the motorcycle-riding spirit of vengeance has returned from the grave, so to speak. This time, his activities seem to center around a specific cemetery known as Salem Fields, and this ghost may actually be a force for good.

Can the Ghost Rider actually be serving a divine purpose? Local news commentator *Linda Wei* doesn't think so.

"Whenever he shows up, mischief is about," Wei remarked at a press conference. "And wherever he goes, innocent victims have been harmed. The Ghost Rider must take responsibility for his actions."

The new Ghost Rider began his appearances in the midst of a shady gang war in New York City. Alleged participants in the war were *Wilson Fisk*, the alleged *Kingpin*, and a "new kid on the block" calling himself *Deathwatch*. Authorities conclude that an environmental hazard was narrowly avoided.

And what of the rumors of a partnership between the Rider and the vicious vigilante called the *Punisher*? An attempt to destroy America's financial center, Wall Street, was apparently thwarted earlier this year by the Rider and the Punisher working in unison. Although the two have not been reported seen together since that time, bystanders claimed that the duo "kicked serious butt."

It was revealed that the acclaimed anarchist known as *Flag-Smasher* and his international terrorist organization, ULTIMATUM (Underground Liberated Totally Integrated Mobile Army To Unite Mankind) were behind the devious and diabolical operation. While their defeat was an obvious act of vigilance, speculations of the rider's intentions continue. The Punisher could not be reached for comment.

Recently, an unidentified task force was hired by community members to track down and put a stop to the phantom biker. The task force, it seems, was comprised entirely of women. During their conflict with the Rider at the above mentioned cemetery, the mutant group X-FACTOR assisted the Rider in his escape.

"He's NOT a criminal," noted *Scott Summers*, X-FACTOR's *Cyclops*. "He was only trying to prevent innocent bloodshed."

Supernatural experts and metaphysicians alike are baffled by the case. Is this Ghost Rider the old one returned to life? And if so, why has he changed his methods of operation? And if not, who is he?

Swami Hareem Kabababa of the Church of Extra Natural Light believes he has the answer.

"This Ghost Rider is the savior of our peoples," Kabababa said. "He has come to judge our souls and send them riding on motorcycles of light into the great beyond. He added that his congregation would later attempt to find the Ghost Rider and trap him in a genie bottle.

Did they succeed? If the relentless appearances of the Ghost Rider are any indication, it would seem not.

—*Gary Barnum*

THE SCARLET WITCH: ON THE DARK SIDE -

SEASON OF THE WITCH

Fashion-watchers may ha
noticed a dramatic new loo
Scarl
Ala *Demi Moore* and *Julia Roberts*.
because Wanda turned wicked!
some emotional turmoil when her
married to the androic
AVENGER, the *Vision*, who
the US government
Vision was put back
the emotional circuits that
made him fall for Wanda in
of sight altogether.

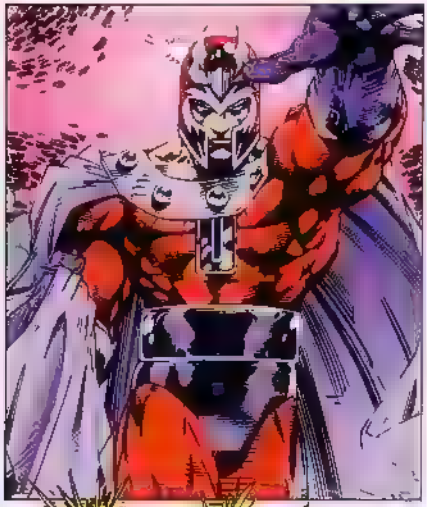
—*Barry Dutter*

10 Best Dressed

BY JANET VAN DYNE

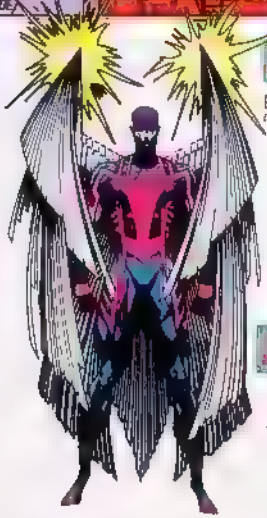
This year's best dressed list is a tribute to the super types whose costumes reflect the "so un-a-d they're good" theme

Top 5 Men



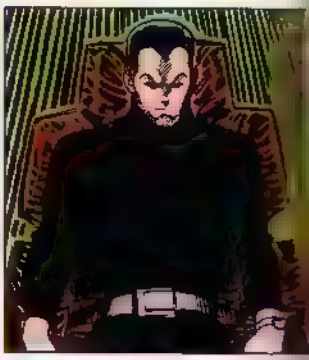
1 What can I say? He's bad to the bone, and he knows how to show it

2 ditto for Cable. This Guy looks like he hangs out in dark alleys for *fun*



3 Angel's newest persona is well, *dangerous!*

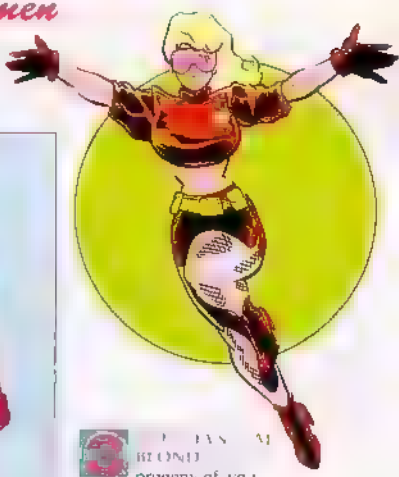
4 My pick to play *Vampire Estat*, when they make the movie. Ladies wouldn't you *die* for this man?



5 Last year, The Donald, this year . . . James Bond *Au courant* Subby!

Top 5 Women

I wish I could look younger every year!



progeny of, you guessed it, the Blonde Phantom! Très chic, like mother like daughter

to the other extreme, our little girl is finally growing up. Last year, trendy teen — this year, lovely lady

Yes, she's a friend, and yes, I feel badly about having trashed her in this very tome last year. But I must say, I've been getting a lot of feedback from certain male friends—why is it that *bad* girls look sexier?

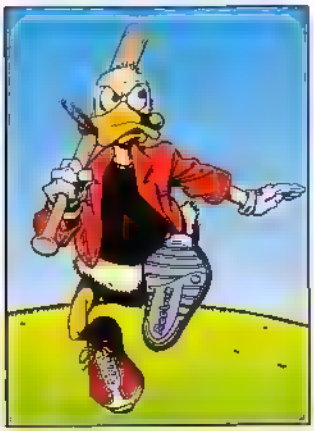
Simplicity and elegance! *C'est tout!*

10 Worst Dressed

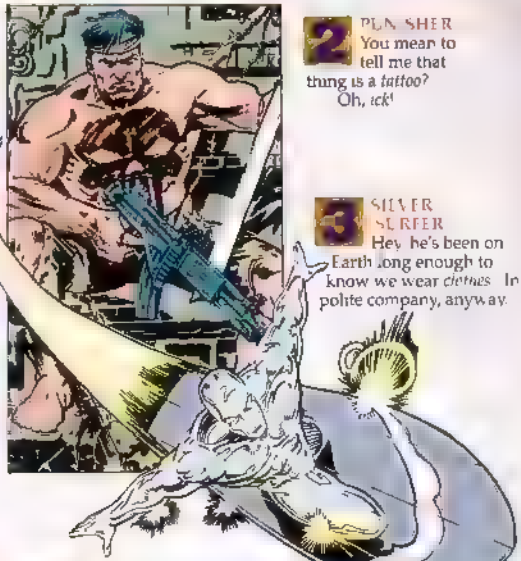
of 1990

Top 5 Men

And of course, the sub-title for this list must be – "so bad they're bad!"



1 HOWARD THE DUCK — Any way you dress it, honey, it's still a duck.



2 PUNISHER — You mean to tell me that thing is a *tattoo*? Oh, *ick*!

3 SILVER SURFER — Hey, he's been on Earth long enough to know we wear *clothes*. In polite company, anyway.

BEFORE AFTER

4 TOOL KILLER — Before, at least he was somewhat *dashing*. Now he looks like a horror flick *rip-off* (and I *hate* horror films.)

BEFORE AFTER

5 BLACK KNIGHT — I must say, I'm hurt. Okay, so he's had the look for years. But he went out of his way to buy new fabric, or the new colors *anyway*. So why doesn't he, at least, ask me to — *suddenly*, a bit?

Top 5 Women

1 JUBILEE
Who does this girl think she *is* — *Robin*? (And I don't mean *Hood*!)

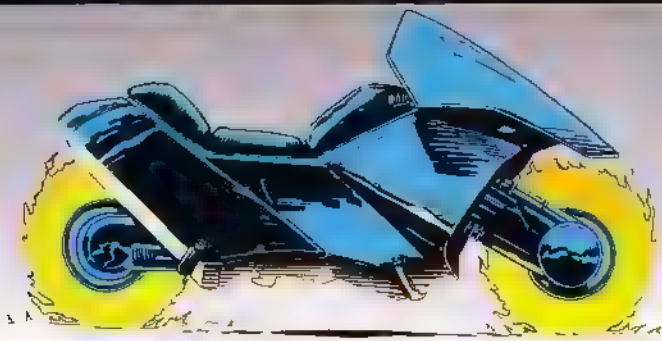
2 PSYLOCKE
A little slutty for *my* taste, but I *must* say, she's so gorgeous she can be forgiven

3 MOSTERAIA
Just a cheap rip-off, if you ask me

4 DIAMOND LIL
Who does she get her dressing tips from, *Cher*?

5 GRAY SHE-HULK
Not a minor slip and from one of my very best friends. I'm appalled. (Maybe I didn't see her enough this past year...)

SOME PEOPLE WOULD SELL THEIR SOUL FOR A BIKE LIKE THIS —



THE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE

ESTIMATED MPG

∞ — CITY

∞ — HIGHWAY

Your mileage may vary

The Bike
For
the '90's

Feature

THE SUPER-TEAM SITUATION:

Out of Control, or Just Out of Steam?

By Wayne Worchesterson

There was a time when things were simpler, when people had a pretty good grasp of what was what. Good guys wore white and bad guys wore primary colors. And as a few of these super heroes got together, they were called a "super hero team," and everyone knew who they were and why they were together.

Ah, the good old days.

Today you'd need a pretty elaborate scorecard just to stay up to date on the roster of the X MEN, let alone its mutant-oriented splinter groups like X-FACTOR, the NEW MUTANTS and EXCALIBUR. The same holds true for the AVENGERS

groups (how many *are* there, really? Do the GREAT LAKES AVENGERS count?).

And as for figuring out *why* any of these "super-teams" exist, well, good luck. Some are pretty obvious, like the Avengers and SHIELD (does SHIELD count?) But the purpose and goals of others, like the X-MEN, are decidedly nebulous. In many cases, the super-teams seem to exist solely to attract the wrath of their enemies, thereby providing almost limitless opportunities to attack each other in public places and cause untold property damage.

Of course, the simple explanation is that these so-called "super heroes" are still human beings, and human beings are social animals by nature. People cluster together, rely on each other. The reason behind the existence of super-teams is that corny song: People . . . need people..."

Plus, when you're facing down a planet-eating behemoth like *Galactus*, it's comforting to have heavy-hitters like *Thor* and *Iron Man* at your side.

This past year saw more than a few oddities in the sub-genre of super hero teams. New costumes, new members, shakeups, breakups, and a lot of plain old silliness.

OUT OF THIS WORLD

For example, take *Excalibur* — please. This band of British and American mutants who supposedly formed their group to protect England and its people from harm, have only recently returned from a year-long absence from this entire *dimension*, let alone England's green and pleasant land!

According to reports garnered from the British press (the tabloids, anyway), the five members of Excalibur — *Captain Britain, Meggan, Nightcrawler, Phoenix* and *Shadowcat* (the last three are former X-MEN, check those scorecards!) — were supposedly jumping universes in a dimension-traversing train, which was in turn powered by a floating metal Muppet!

We've lost count of the exact number of dimensions we visited," admitted Captain Britain in an interview with the British tabloid *Heroes and Lots of 'Em*. "It simply became one big blur after a while. Some of the places we saw were frightening, some were just a little different, others were actually enjoyable, and a couple of them were well, stupid."

I'd really rather not go into it," said Shadowcat in the interview. "In many ways, it was like a long dream. Parts of it were nightmarish. It's just so great to be home. Or, at least in England."

Excalibur's multi-dimensional jaunt was actually a mistake — quite a big one at that — with causes that are apparently still unknown. Reports of their journey include tales of an alternate Earth completely dominated by conflicting super-beings, another Earth in which America was the Old World and Europe was the unexplored frontier, and another in which the medieval feudal system or government had never been abandoned.

"We saw *Professor X* and the *Starjammers* at one point," Nightcrawler recalled wistfully, referring to the supposed founding 'father' of the X Men who is reported lost in space with a starship crew known only as the Starjammers. "If we could have ended up with him, it might have made the whole trip worthwhile."

While Excalibur was gone, violent crime in England rose a startling 13%, while the British pound lost financial ground to the dollar and other foreign monies. Though they seem to make few crime-fighting efforts, Excalibur's very presence in England seems to build morale and deter crime.

Can the same be said of other current super-teams?

The Fantastic Four certainly have played a major role in setting the standard for a super hero team. For starters, they established and defined the four critical members of any viable super-team: the Big Strong Guy, the Smart, Cool headed Leader with an agenda, the Young Hothead, and the Girl. They cast the mold which produced so many subsequent super-teams.

IN A RECENT TASTE TEST, MORE CUSTOMERS PREFERRED . . .

Fantastic Four Classic

This year, however, there was a new Fantastic Four, if only for a brief time. *Spider-Man, the Incredible Hulk, Ghost Rider* and *Wolverine* apparently were duped into thinking the real members of the Fantastic Four had been killed, and therefore assumed the FF's mantle to avenge their deaths. (For those of you unfamiliar with "super hero" etiquette, this is pretty much standard procedure.)

This is all fine and good, until you realize that not only does this foursome lack *three* of the four required stereotypes (i.e. no Girl, no Young Hothead, no Smart Leader), but that they represent four of the least likely team players on this misbegotten globe!

To demonstrate the importance of choosing the right members of a super hero team, let us conduct a side-by-side blind taste test of the new Fantastic Four and Fantastic Four Classic.

We'll start with the Incredible Hulk vs. the Thing, since they are the most similar members. Basically, these two are almost interchangeable, though the Hulk is somewhat worse-tempered and certainly more unpredictable than the cigar-chomping Ben Grimm. It's a tight one, folks, but since the Thing definitely has less of a problem following orders (from the Smart Leader, natch), score one for FF Classic.

Ghost Rider and the *Human Torch* are natural pair-offs, if only because both of their brains are on fire. Of course, the similarities end there, as one is a handsome, impetuous young man, and the other is the eerie embodiment of vengeance. The Human Torch, though, is more likely to work well with the Smart Leader . . . or at least better than the Living Spirit of Vengeance, who would in all likelihood chase down every last opponent who looked at him funny. Not only that, but flying around while shooting flames at people is quite a bit more handy in combat than riding up the side of a building with your Harley and trying to hit people with a chain (though that *is* pretty nasty, too . . .). Score two for FF Classic, zero for new FF.

We're forced to compare Spider-Man to the *Invisible Woman*, if only because Spider-Man is the only member of the new FF who probably is good natured enough *not* to hunt down and kill this reporter likening him to a woman. (Right, Spidey ol' pal?) Spider-Man who is definitely an effective hero in his own right, unfortunately would probably be murdered by his own teammates within a year of the new FF's existence, primarily because of his habit of making terrible jokes while engaged in combat. At the very least, he would serve as more of a distraction to them than anything else, while the Invisible Woman conversely serves as a *very* addictive distraction for any male foes the FF encounter. Score three for FF Classic, zero for new FF.

Which brings us to Wolverine vs. Mr. Fantastic. Which is the better Smart Leader? Not too hard to figure out, really. Reed Richards is more likely to build a time-traveling space-sled, while Wolverine could pretty much be counted on to slice it to bits sooner or later. Clean sweep for FF Classic.

The Defenders, meanwhile, enjoyed a brief but effective reunion this year, when the body of the Incredible Hulk was supposedly possessed by a being from another dimension (no, not one of the many visited by Excalibur — a different one entirely). Dr. Strange and Prince Namor, the Sub-Mariner lent helping hands, eyes and fists to drive the creature back to its home dimension and out of the Hulk's body.

On the other hand, it's easy to second guess the super hero teams. There's an old saying that goes something like, "Politicians cover up their mistakes, journalists publish theirs, and doctors bury theirs." So what do super hero teams do with their mistakes? Because, in a large percentage of their missions, super-teams are fighting for the lives of innocent civilians — us. In fact, they are very often fighting for the safety of the entire planet! So what happens when they lose?

It's a serious question which could potentially affect any and every person on Earth. Our future is, in many ways, in their hands.

NEW Fantastic Four

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Which raises the issue of the super hero teams of the future. So far, the new decade has already produced a new super-team: THE NEW WARRIORS. Though little is known about their origins or purpose, one thing is clear — they've got a lot to learn.

The group's known members are *Speedball*, *Firestar*, *Kid Nova*, *Namorita*, *Marvel Boy* and the mysterious *Night Thrasher*. For those of you completely unfamiliar with the team, they are, respectively, a rubber bouncing ball named after a pen or an illegal drug (take your pick); a hot-headed girl who flings microwaves with the greatest of ease; a kid in a really funny-looking helmet who can fly really fast; Prince Namor's second cousin, a telekinetic boy; and a street hood on the skateboard. These new kids on the block all appear to be under the drinking age, so there is at least one mitigating factor to the New Warriors.

But from the start, it's clear that this team is in trouble — namewise at the very least. The "NEW WARRIORS?" How long could *that* have taken to think up? The Uncanny X-MEN, ALPHA FLIGHT, the mighty AVENGERS, the DEFENDERS . . . and the NEW WARRIORS? It just doesn't sing.

Was the *Goon Platoon* considered? Or *Six Pack*? Did they even think of calling themselves the *Pre-Pubescent Protagonists*? *The Rockin' Rebel Roughhousers*? *The Vincible Vibes*? *Highly Hip Heroes*? Not even the *Awesome Kick Some-Serious-Butt Champion Dudes*? Ah, opportunity lost . .

Individually, the NEW WARRIORS' names are even worse. Speedball, as mentioned earlier, takes his name from an illicit substance. Kid Nova? Does this guy actually *like* to be called "kid?" Does *anyone* like to be called "kid?" Ditto Marvel Boy. And as for Night Thrasher — well, you figure that one out. We certainly can't.

So far, the only public reports on the actions of the New Warriors have been sketchy at best. The team apparently has already fought the *Juggernaut* and *Terrax*, two of the nastiest super-powered criminals around. And in typical super-team fashion, the Warriors and their foes accounted for about $2 million in property damage at these melees. So they've got *that* down, at the very least. They are based in New York, another tried-and-true super-team tradition.

However, Night Thrasher — the New Warriors' self-proclaimed leader — managed to establish himself as potentially ruthless in a recent battle in New York City's Chinatown, during which he apparently choked an opponent from behind with a steel wire. Details are sparse, but numerous witnesses confirmed a gang-like knifefight between Night Thrasher and an unidentified man.

So are these new heroes actually heroes? Or are they just another gang of thugs, administering their own brand of street justice? Most people feel safe when they see an Avengers Quinjet, or happen upon a member of the Fantastic Four — what will they feel when they are confronted by six teen vigilantes with enough raw power to wipe out a city block? Time will tell.

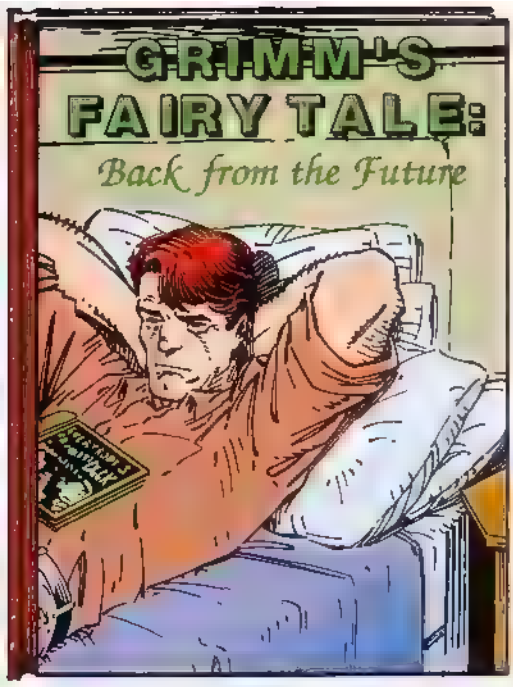
It is clear that the New Warriors *want* to be considered "heroes for the 90s." If any of the Warriors happen to be reading this article, then, here are a few suggestions from the YEAR-IN-REVIEW staff members:

With everything in our world becoming bigger, faster, more complicated and harder to understand, it's little wonder that the concept of a super hero team has grown too big, too fast. There may be dozens of them — with scores of overmuscled card-carying members — and they may wreak unimaginable havoc fighting battles the whys and wherefores of which few of us seem privy to, but they are also often unsung heroes who risk their lives regularly for the common good of humankind.

So they can certainly take their share of friendly ribbing, too.

We hope.

— *Wayne Worcestershire*



Ben Grimm, relaxing at home

What do you do for a living when you stop being a monster? That's the dilemma facing *Benjamin J. Grimm*, the man known as the super-strong *Thing* from the FANTASTIC FOUR, America's premier super-team, before he recently reverted to his original human form. Little has been heard from the FF lately, so we at YEAR IN REVIEW set up an interview with Ben Grimm in one of his favorite Manhattan taverns to find out just what his team has been up to and whether he might be considering a new career. We're still not sure of the first answer, but we now know the second. Ben Grimm is America's newest and potentially hottest stand-up comedian!

Ben certainly didn't look as if he was in a mood to tell jokes at the outset of our interview. When we asked him where the FF had been lately, Grimm sighed wearily and explained, "Reed doesn't want us ta tell the public about some of our adventures. I guess he thunks it'd scare 'em if they knew about all the bad guys we fight. Actually, he always says they just wouldn't believe a lot of what we do even if we told 'em."

"Come on, Mr. Grimm," we said, "This is the 1990s. Our readership can handle it."

"Awright, buddy," he said, "you asked fer it. But don't blame me if you find some o' this stuff a bit hard ta believe." And he proceeded to tell us the wildest tall tale we had ever heard!

This year the FF decided to travel into the future in their time machine with their buddies, *Thor* and *Iron Man*, where they met the wackiest batch of characters you could imagine. "You remember this guy *Kang the Conqueror*, who fought the AVENGERS?" Grimm asked. "Turns out there's a whole bunch of these jerks. All different varieties. Humans, aliens, even a talkin' lizard guy. I think it's like some interdimensional version of the Shriners. An' we also ran inta this robot, *Death's Head*. Weird guy. Kept stickin th' word 'yes' at the end of all his sentences. Like 'We should clobber the Kangs now, yes? Drove us crazy. Is all of this clear to ya so far?"

We've got to admit it. For a while we thought Grimm was going to give us the kind of deadly dull all-business answer we get from interviewing *Dr. Richards*. We never expected him to perform this comedy routine instead. "So what big menace did you fight in the future?" we asked.

Grimm's expression darkened. "It was *Galactus*."

"The gigantic alleged alien who's attacked New York several times?" we asked. "The public never learned what exactly he was after."

Grimm looked us in the eye and said, with total seriousness, "Actually, he wanted to eat the Earth."

Well, that had all of us on the floor in hysterical laughter. "Eat the Earth?? Does he plan to cook it first? Does he carry around a cosmic microwave oven or what?"

Grimm seemed flustered. "Hey, do I look like the French Chef? I dunno. He just eats them. Mebbe he uses a salad fork. Who cares?"

By this time a whole crowd had gathered to listen to the story, just as convulsed with merriment as we were.

"So then you went home," we said.

"Not quite. We ended up on this alternate Earth where Dan Quayle wuz President. Aw c'mon, you guys! This is serious! Lemme explain!"

"What'd he do?" yelled a guy from the back. "Launch a nuclear attack on Russia?"

"Well, actually," Grimm said, pausing for effect, "he did. But he didn't have any choice," he said, shouting with convincingly feigned rage over all the laughter.

So after we fought Stalin and stopped the war, we got back on the sled."

"And this time you got home for real."

"Well, no, turns out we got ourselves lost again."

"Which universe did you land in this time?" another bar patron shouted.

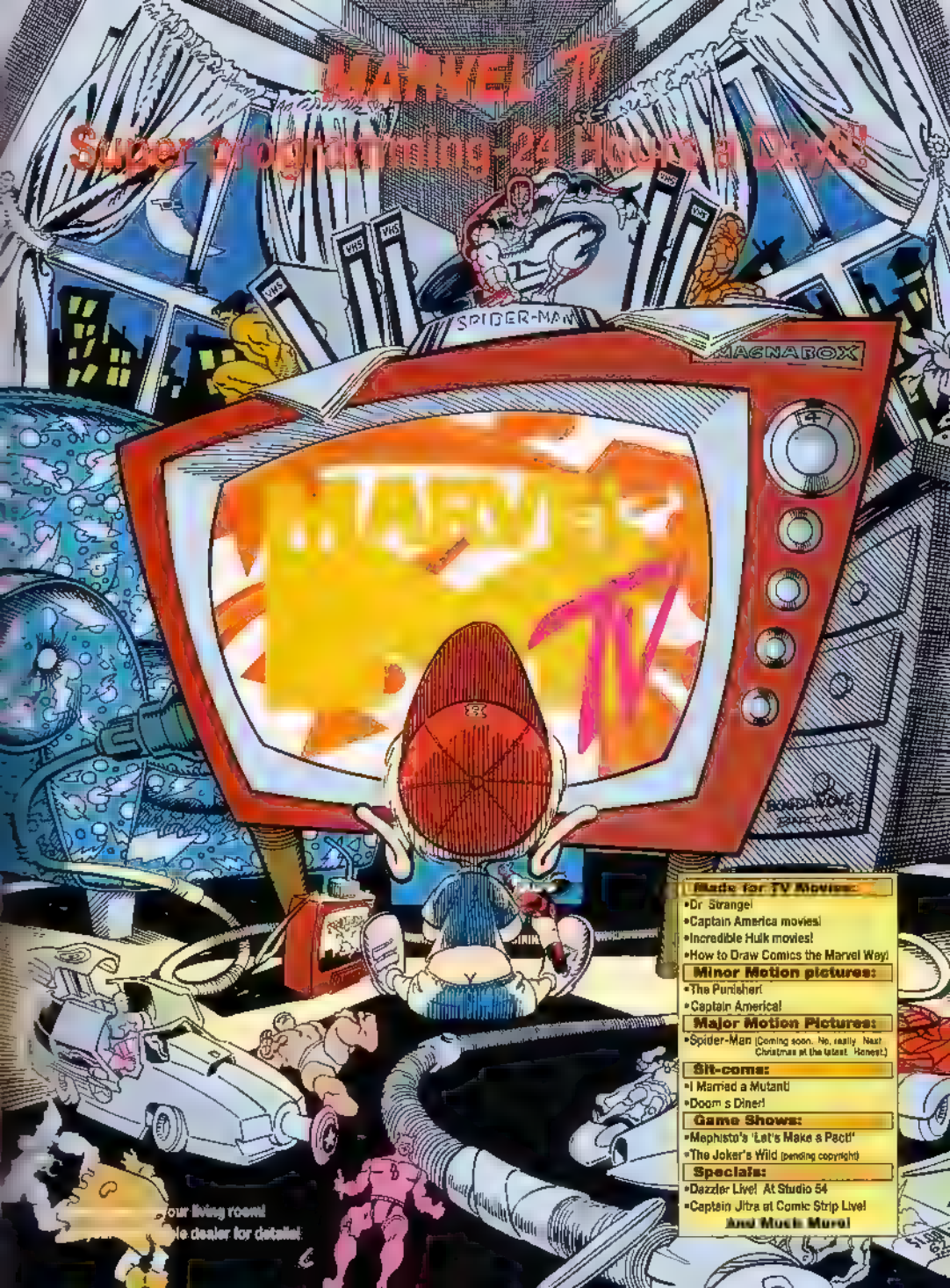
"Oh, it was the right universe. Even the right Earth. But it was sort of the wrong time period. We landed on this island in some kind o' time warp, so it was crawlin' with..."

Everybody in the whole place yelled with one voice, "DINOSAURS!" and broke into gales of laughter and even cheering.

"Aaah, the heck with it!" Grimm said, getting up and putting on his hat, playing out his pose of mock seriousness to the end. "You guys can make up yer own story!"

Then the owner of the tavern came up, shook Grimm's hand, and offered to pay him to come back and do his comedy act there the next weekend. Grimm did a double take, and pretended to storm out of the bar as the clientele burst into enthusiastic applause.

Peter Sanderson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▲ A gathering of heroes: The Avengers, Alpha Flight, The Peoples Protectorate and members from the under sea Kingdom of Atlantis confront the nuclear menace of COMBINE.

THE PEACE CORPSE — MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE!?!

The world narrowly avoids a nuclear holocaust!

Nuclear holocaust — the ultimate horror that almost became reality in 1990.

The world was brought to the *brink* of a nuclear holocaust this past year by a Soviet terrorist group known as THE PEACE CORPSE. They hijacked a British submarine—the WATERWIND and planned on detonating it in New York in the hopes of starting World War III

The CORPSE motto is: "The only way to save mankind is by destroying it!" But lucky for us, the world's mightiest heroes banded together to *stop* the PEACE CORPSE.

After several high level meetings between the United States government, the British government, and the United Nations, it was decided that the best course of action would be to utilize America's mightiest heroes, THE AVENGERS, in fighting this newest menace. The Avengers' task: to stop the PEACE CORPSE at all costs.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union dispatched its PEOPLE'S PROTECTORATE to capture the terrorists, since they were Soviet citizens. Unfortunately, this caused a mistaken confrontation between the AVENGERS and the PEOPLE'S PROTECTORATE concerning who had jurisdiction over taking the terrorists into custody. The battle drifted unknowingly into the territorial boundaries of the undersea kingdom of ATLANTIS, and the Atlanteans were less than pleased with the intrusion.

After a three way battle in which the meager forces of Atlantis were scattered, the AVENGERS and the PEOPLE'S PROTECTORATE called a truce and teamed up to defeat the PEACE CORPSE.

The two groups tracked the WATERWIND to Conception Bay, St. John's, Newfoundland. There, ALPHA FLIGHT, acting with the authority of the Canadian government, took control of the situation. They coordinated strategies with both the AVENGERS and the PEOPLE'S PROTECTORATE. They fought long and hard, but not even the combined strengths of the three super groups plus the ATLANTEANS (who followed the AVENGERS and the PEOPLE'S PROTECTORATE up to Canada looking to continue their battle, but thankfully, saw the gravity of the situation and pledged their support for the remainder of the conflict) could stop the terrorists from detonating the WATERWIND's nuclear warheads. If not for the quick witted *Shaman*, ALPHA FLIGHT's resident mystic, the people and land of Newfoundland would have been turned into nuclear soot! Eyewitnesses claim that Shaman inverted his mystical pouch and sucked the entire area and all its occupants into it.

The two leaders of the PEACE CORPSE, *Prokvitch* and *Strokov*, had linked themselves biologically to the warheads' detonator, and in the ensuing explosion were transformed into a being known as the *COMBINE*— an amalgam of both men. It was a truly terrifying sight to behold. The Combine hovered in the air like an evil talisman. It glowed bright silver and both men had been fused together back to back.

During that time, the Combine, which still had the consciousness of Strokov and Prokvitch, was convinced by the heroes that the world's destruction would not lead to a new beginning. Their current whereabouts are unknown.

— *Eric Fein*

SUPER-WOMAN FOR THE 90's?

Baloney, says the Sensational She-Hulk

Waking up and looking in the mirror is something of an ordeal for everyone, but for New York City *Attorney Jennifer Walters*, AKA the *Sensational She-Hulk*, it is something more potentially frightening.

This year has been an especially traumatic one for Walters, who became the green, super-strong She-Hulk years ago after receiving a blood transfusion from her cousin, *Dr. Bruce Banner*. Banner is best known for his alter-ego, the *Incredible Hulk*, an unpredictable gamma-spawned brute with unimaginable strength and ferocity. Within the past few months, Walters has been transmuted to her original human self, to a gray, semi-intelligent and hostile Hulk clone, and finally back to her (dare we say it?) normal self.

But relaxing in her posh Manhattan high-rise condo, Jennifer Walters — all 6'7" of her — presents the image of a woman who's got it all together. In fact, her demeanor is so casual, and, well, normal, that it's only her massive green frame that reminds you she's something more than human.

"It's a crazy world," Walters says, sipping espresso and reclining on a really expensive-looking couch. "I mean, Toad Men attacked me here in this apartment. Can you believe this? I mean, *'Toad Men'*?

"Course, they weren't *real* Toad Men ... it was all part of a ruse, which also involved this huge tarp surrounding my condo, painted to appear as if there were millions of spaceships — anyway, you get my point. If you superhero long enough, you start to get a bit, ah, jaded. But once in a while it hits you again, this is a *crazy* world ..."

It's a world that Jennifer Walters appears to be comfortable in, though. As a full time New York attorney, Walters nevertheless still finds time to "super hero", using her amazing strength and powers to combat wrongdoing wherever it exists — even in other universes.

"The whole 'Baloneyverse' thing is something I'd rather not discuss, if you don't mind," Walters requests politely between nibbles of croissants. "Between the duck and the 'She-Hulk smash' stuff, it's just something I would like to put behind me. Besides, there's more to me than muscle, you know."

Not wishing to cross a woman who can juggle wrecking balls, this reporter obliged the jade giantess. The incident to which she refers, however, is fairly well-documented. "The duck" is *Howard the Duck*, by all reports a walking, talking duck from another dimension who is particularly fond of Havana cigars; the 'Baloneyverse' is another dimension (not Howard's; a different one) composed mainly of deli meats and cheeses.

Crazy world, indeed.

Walters and Howard the Duck traveled to the Baloneyverse to rescue Empire State University *Professor Brent Wilcox*, who had inadvertently been drawn there. Before all was righted, Walters had reverted to her original human form, then to a huge, gray female version of the berserk Hulk, before regaining her current form.

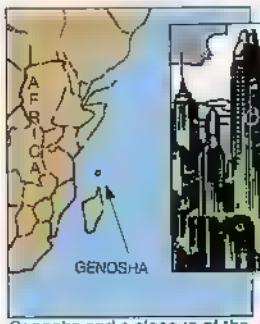
"It was just very unpleasant, seeing that side of myself," the She-Hulk admits. "Can't we talk about something else? I mean, I do have a *life*, too ..." And it's true. Ask her about her latest court case, her latest love, her latest clothing find ... anything you might ask a good friend. Though we may know her only as the Sensational She-Hulk, one thing is certain. Jennifer Walters is in actuality as human as any of us.

— *Evan Skolnick*

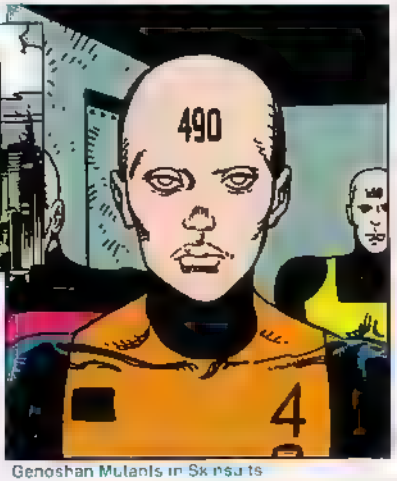
This is a super hero? Hey, give the gal a break — even *Captain America* catches the latest episode of *thirtysomething* when he can . . .

GENOSHA

A Green and Pleasant Land?



Genosha and a closeup of the Capital City, Hammer Bay.



Genoshan Mutants in Skinsuits

On the darker side of the news this year is *Genosha*, a small island off the coast of south east Africa, boasting the highest standard of living in the world The cause of this miraculous economic prosperity has come under intense political scrutiny this past year

Despite long-standing lucrative trade contracts between the United States and Genosha, this island was first brought to the attention of the American public in 1988 when *Jenny Ransome* and *Philip Moreau*, two native Genoshans, came to the United States seeking political asylum.

Jenny Ransome

Philip Moreau

They claimed that Genosha's unusual prosperity was due to the enslavement of Genosha's mutant population. According to Moreau, mutants were being kidnapped from their homes and brought to a laboratory developed by his father, *Dr. James Moreau* (officially known as the *Genegineer*). Once at the laboratory, the kidnapped mutant would have his memories erased, his reproductive abilities stunted, his hair shaved and his skin permanently bonded to a skinsuit which would maintain all life-functions. He would then have a number tattooed on his forehead and would be referred to only by this number from then on. His mutant abilities would then be harnessed and put to use as the state of Genosha saw fit

Genoshan officials would neither confirm nor deny these allegations and demanded the immediate deportation of Ransome and Moreau from the U.S. After the United States did not deport them, Genoshan Storm Troopers were sent to retrieve them They were reportedly driven off by a group of mutants from the U. S. known as the X-MEN

Warlock

In a major affront to international law, Genoshan troops came to the United States and kidnapped members of the NEW MUTANTS, an off-shoot of the X-MEN After bringing the mutants to Genosha, the New Mutant known as WARLOCK was reportedly killed The Genoshan President declared that they were going to put the mutants on trial for high treason against the state of Genosha If found guilty, the mutants would face the penalty of execution. In order to obtain the release of their teammates, the remaining NEW MUTANTS, along with the X-MEN and their sister group, X-FACTOR, went into Genosha and freed their captive teammates.

The uncharacteristic aggressiveness of the Genoshan government was rumored to be a reflection of the influence of a shadow power who held the ear of the President. It has also been reported that this third party was killed, as was the Genegineer. A new Genoshan president, formerly *Chief Magistrate Anderson*, has recently come to power and is reportedly struggling to reconstruct a heavily damaged Genosha *Havok*, a member of the X-MEN team, has decided to stay in Genosha for an indeterminate period in order to help transform the ailing political system, as well as re-educate the enslaved mutants.

Former President

Dr James Moreau

Though U.S. government sources would not confirm the existence of such blatant mutant racism and exploitation, statements made by high ranking Genoshan officials surely indicate that for Genoshan mutants, Genosha is anything *but* what their tourist brochures claim — a green and pleasant land.

—Suzanne Gaffney

McCritic's opinions

OF SUPER BOOKS & SUPER BOMBS!

Or: Galactus said there'd be days like these . . .

Greetings, greetings, gentle readers, and welcome to another installment of McCritic's Guide to the Good, the Bad, and the Banal. This time around we've got a slew of spandex, a bevy of biceps, a cache of kiss and tell, and a medley of mediocrity. So let's not waste a single minute!

Out on Video

One of the least controversial films in a long time — everyone agrees it belongs on video! Directed by Raoul Gibbons and starring Avenging *Wonder Man Simon Williams*, this pre-historically-set film shows us that the real cause of the dinosaurs extinction was probably boredom more than anything else. Its pacing is abysmal, its "serious" lines are uproarious ly funny, and its "funny" lines would make a lotto jackpot winner frown. Action would usually make up for this in some people's books — but not in mine. Williams sleepwalks through the action without a care in the world and I can hardly blame him. After all, even if you weren t impossible to harm, could you, (or anyone, for that matter) act worried when faced with a mangy sprinkling of over-aged actors toting obvious paper maché spears? I think not.

Simon Williams

ARKON 5: Rated **HV**. If a Hydrogen bomb has destroyed all other viewing materials, consider renting it on Video.

Doctor Strange — The Man — The Myth — The Magic

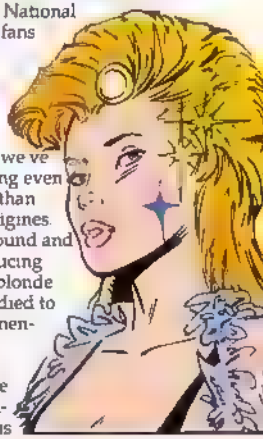
Ms. Blessing with Dr.Strange

Morgana Blessing's new book "exposing" the "Master of the Mystic Arts" has just been released in paperback for $3.95 — and you should feel guilty for paying so little! Adding a mystic, and possibly fictitious, twist to news articles of the not-so-recent past, Ms. Blessing has written what might finally be the long-awaited bridge between *All the President's Men* and *Bewitched*. *Doctor Stephen Strange*, former surgeon, former party-going animal, and current svelte, laid-back bohemian is even more likable than his book (if that's possible), judging from his all-too brief appearance on "Hour Thirteen" Mystic PM Magazine. I especially loved The All-Seeing Eye of Agamotto. If such an object really does exist, you'll probably find it hopelessly enraptured by this exasperatingly poignant book in-between re-readings of *Janet Van Dyne's* sizzling autobiography *Some Assembling Required*, another work so truly deserving of its heaps of lavish praise that our eyes are almost not worthy enough to look upon it.

DOCTOR STRANGE: THE MAN — THE MYTH — THE MAGIC: Rated **HU**. So good that Hyperbole would still be an Understatement.

Film

It's 12:00 — do you know where your children are? If you don't, you can probably find them at this very hard to find current controversial cult classic depicting the life and lifestyle of one of the world's most hated minorities: a mutant! That's right, National Geographic fans — pull up your La-Z-Boy and microwave some popcorn, 'cause we've got something even more taboo than topless aborigines: a genuine sound and light transducing strawberry blonde singer who died to save our dimension but got back just in time to make the occasional mysterious appearance to fan the already roaring flames of her (no-doubt) soon-to-be stardom! You know, my pets, critics come and critics go, but McCritic's come and gone long enough to remember the first time this sparkling smash was supposed to set the screen sizzling. Well, I said it then and I'll say it now: So what?! Sure — she can turn a car's blaring horn into a suntan, but again, *so what?* The question — and the hype — is not whether or not "*Alison Blaire*" (if that really is her name) is a mutant. The concern of this critic is: Can she act? Can she direct? Can she write? The inability to perform any of these functions certainly hasn't barred the way for many of today's top ulcer-inducing "talents," but it is a valid list of questions nonetheless. And the answer, my loyal subjects, is an unqualified No!



DAZZLER: THE MOVIE. Rated **BA**: Be Afraid – be very afraid.

—*R. Tokar*

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

RENOWNED PSYCHIATRIST seeks 5 - 10 neurotic enhanced power beings for new study. Pay involved. Spider-Man need not apply. Contact: Dr. L. Samson

WANTED: Back-ups for a hot act. Bring your sunglasses. Call Dazzler

—

Bald male looking for talented youngsters.

Call "X"

I understand those strange changes.

Casting call. Seeking young, red-headed model for suds part. Ask for Turk, Secret Hospital.

WANTED: Singer/Dancer/Teleporter for hot rock band. Female pref. Call Guido, **c/o Lila Cheney Band.**

Be a SECRET AGENT! See the world! Risk your life! Carry a big gun! Contact Pierce at 555-FURY!

VIGILANTE OUT OF WORK? Steady jobs and benefits are available. Call Silver Sable Int'l.

LOST & FOUND

LOST: Male caucasian boy, early teens, blond, answers to Alex. Please call Dr. or Mrs. Power any time of the day or night. No crank calls please.

FOUND: Male white miniature horse, unusual breed, very intelligent. Contact Turk's glue factory before Fri.

LOST & FOUND

LOST: One orange cat. Answers to Niels. DO NOT PET HARD! Really. Contact S. Ball.

LOST: One pair of small, white-feathered wings. May smell of sea-salt. Please return to "Subby" at Oracle, Inc.

LOST: Four Fantastic people, plus one. Last seen traveling through time. If found, please return to Four Freedom's Plaza.

WANTED: Any information leading to a missing movie. Call CAP, c/o Avengers Mansion.

WANTED: Any information leading to a missing movie. Call PUN, 555-KILL.

WANTED: Any information leading to a missing movie. Call Brother Voodoo, 555-ZOMB.

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Friends, relatives, and enemies won't leave you alone — even after they're dead and buried? Call the

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Where Ghouls don't stand a ghost of a chance!

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Do you have people on the run — because of your nails?

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FOR SALE

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Bruce Banner's purple pants (available in all sizes & conditions), limited stock of blue and pin-striped! Scraps of She-Hulk clothing (undergarment scraps extra charge)! Empty shells from the Punisher's weapons (monogram engraving available)! Slightly-used gen-u-ine Spider-Man webs (get 'em while they're sticky)! Special leftovers: Grab-bags with pieces of Hydrobase, the Berlin Wall, and scene of last reported X-Men battle (now at discount rates)! Contact: **Turk's Chotzke Closet.**

FOR SALE: Surplus of **Spider-Man photos.** Low, low prices, many poses. Contact Peter P. Frames extra.

WANT SUPER HERO SNAPSHOTS?

I've seen 'em all! Huge inventory. Mail only.

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FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Gizmos and gadgets galore! We stock all scientific experimental parts, superhuman weapons, etc. Use with caution — not responsible for injuries. Batteries not included — some assembly required. Write "The Kirby Store" for our free catalogue.

FOR SALE: Baloney surplus! Salami, pepperoni, head cheese and more. All the meat (except duck) you can eat.
Call **Howard** in Cleveland, **1-800-555-DUCK.**

SALE: Used skateboard for sale. Contact "Thrash" at **555-NITE.**

PERSONALS

SWM(s) seeks multiple women for multiple pleasures. Liking of green and yellow a must. Contact: Madrox, the Multiple Man (one of me is waiting for your call).

Large Intelligent Dog seeks new home away from bad vibes. Non-smokers pref. Transportation provided. Will not howl at moon. Contact: Lockjaw.

FAST DUDE seeks fast chick for fast living. Willing to be Eternally yours if you can catch me! Contact: Makkari.

LOOKING FOR A HOT DATE? I can set your heart aflame! Blonde, trim, SWM w/ steady job seeks woman to flick my bic. Come on, baby, light my fire!
Contact: Pyro.

PERSONALS

Wanted: Une petit chou-fleur to sow the seeds of love. Shrinking violet — don't despair! My green thumb will bring you to full blossom! Love of southern exposure a must. Contact: Plantman (I'm a little strange, but I'll grow on you).

I keep looking for a heart of gold to press up against my chest of steel. Extensive, well-oiled passion and good times guaranteed for an open-minded woman.
Call Machine Man.

I'm seeking a new fiancee — my last one was a real witch. I can really "Limbo."
Leave message for I. M. Mortus, Box 666.

DOWNTOWN. You reached for the salt — six tables away without getting out of your seat. I look for flexibility in a man. Write me at Box 20.

Do you like apple pie, fireworks, and John Phillip Sousa? Does the National Anthem or the Washington Memorial bring a tear to your eye? Call CAP, c/o Avengers Mansion.

FEELING BLUE, liebchen? I wish you were. My gypsy blood will waltz you to the Blue Danube. Call Kurt at 555–BAMF.

COME PLAY IN MY SANDBOX! SWM looking for a woman who's not afraid to get her hands dirty. Non-smoker pref. Call Sandy Mann.

PERSONALS

Me, a **SWM** with a cold nose and a warm heart. You, an SF with her own coat who doesn't mind cold feet. Contact Iceman c/o X-FACTOR.

Let me turn you into an animal!
Call 1-900-55-SERSI.

MISCELLANEOUS

SAVAGE LAND EXPEDITIONS:

See Dinosaurs! See Savages! Get a tan at the South Pole! Special group rates for Mutants! Contact: Kevin P.

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They make great conversation pieces! Taxidermist on premises. Contact: **Surf & Turk's Sea Adventures.**

Brag about your strength! Complain about humans! Speak in sentence fragments! Call the Hulk line,

1 900 555 HULK!

It's a smash!

BAD DEEDS will be ***PUNISHED!***
Remember — Frank is watching you!

THE TEMPTATION of DAREDEVIL

Search for the Son of the Inhumans' Leader takes Daredevil and Friends to Hell and Back

Finding a lost child can be tough enough, but when the devilishsh *Mephisto* decides to interfere, the experience can turn into something "soul searing." That's what the super hero *Daredevil* and his friends — the genetically-altered woman *Number 9*, the animal rights terrorist *Brandy Ash*, and the INHUMANS *Gorgon* and *Karnak* — discovered shortly after they found *Pope*, the lost son of *Black Bolt*.

Number 9, whose shocking origin was related by this reporter in the previous MARVEL YEAR IN REVIEW (Business Section), reveals in this exclusive report Mephisto's fantastic plot to imprison Daredevil, herself, and the others in his realm. In consideration of her safety, it has been agreed to keep Number 9's present whereabouts secret.

The group's ultimate test of survival came shortly after the group found Pope. It was as the Inhumans were preparing to leave for their home that the ground suddenly opened up beneath them and they all plummeted into a fiery abyss. The result was that each fell into what seemed to be his own version of Hell. For Gorgon and Karnak, it was the temptation of a lavish and licentious life. For Brandy and Pope, it was an agonizing series of seemingly unscaleable mountains. For Number 9, it was the saccharin realm of "Billboard Heaven" where women existed only as voluptuous, beautiful nudes in gigantic centerfold posters and angelically beautiful men who, though alive, were empty of feeling. And for Daredevil, it was isolation in a frozen wasteland.

But Daredevil refused to accept the frozen death Mephisto planned for him. Instead his super-senses, which compensate for the sight he lost in a radioactive waste accident when he was young, gave Daredevil the insight and simple, yet transcendent spiritual power he needed to escape his cursed fate.

And all the others, including Number 9 who was the most emotionally vulnerable, survived their own hells and managed to gather together to face their tormentor. With Daredevil acting as their spokesman, the super hero stated that Mephisto's plot had failed. "You tested us, and we won," he said. "We won't fight you. We're simply walking away. Turning the other cheek, Mephisto. You've heard of that?" But the furious Mephisto refused to accept defeat. Instead, he lashed back — incinerating Brandy in a brutal attempt to intimidate Daredevil and the others into surrendering.

Before he could underscore the depth of his defeat with the ashes of another victim, however, he was attacked by his nemesis, the space-faring super hero, the *Silver Surfer*. The Silver Surfer had discovered Mephisto's plan and had crossed the vastness of space in order to prevent Mephisto from killing them.

If ever there was a time to head for the high ground, that was it. And Daredevil goaded the group up the path to freedom. Mephisto called out for Daredevil to remain and witness the battle. Daredevil not only rejected the offer, he crowned it with something Mephisto found incomprehensible . . . forgiveness. With Daredevil's words, they won their liberation.

Shortly thereafter, they all separated. Gorgon and Karnak went home with Pope. Daredevil returned to New York. And Number 9 left to start a new life . . . alone.

— *Dwight Jon Zimmerman*

Mephisto allegedly attempts to freeze the isolated Daredevil to death in the Nether World prior to seizing his soul.
artist's representation

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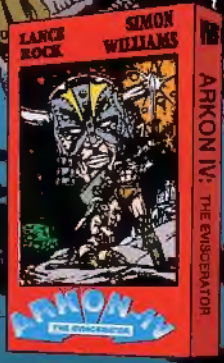

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